THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Tranſlated by

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VOLUME THE THIRD.

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THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK XVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Telemachus returning to the city, relates to Penelope the ſum of his travels. Ulyſſes is conducted by Eumæus to the palace, where his old dog Argus acknowledges his maſter, after an abſence of twenty years, and dies with joy. Eumæus returns into the country, and Ulyſſes remains among the ſuitors, whoſe behaviour is deſcribed.

SOON as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Sprinkled with roſeate light the dewy lawn;
In haſte the prince aroſe, prepar'd to part;
His hand impatient graſps the pointed dart;
Fair on his feet the poliſh'd ſandals ſhine,
And thus he greets the maſter of the ſwine.
My friend, adieu; let this ſhort ſtay ſuffice;
I haſte to meet my mother's longing eyes,
And end her tears, her ſorrows, and her ſighs.

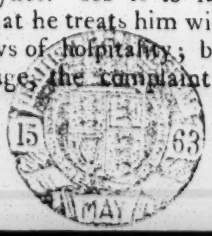
v. 8. *I haſte to meet my mother's longing eyes.*] There are two reaſons for the return of Telemachus; one, the duty a ſon owes to a mother; the other, to find an opportunity to put in execution the deſigns concerted with Ulyſſes: the poet therefore ſhifts the ſcene from the lodge to the palace. Telemachus takes not Ulyſſes along with him, for fear he ſhould raiſe ſuſpicion in the ſuitors, that a perſon in a beggar's garb has ſome ſecret merit, to obtain the familiarity of a king's ſon, and this might be an occaſion of a diſcovery; whereas when Ulyſſes afterwards appears amongſt the ſuitors, he is thought to be an entire ſtranger to Telemachus, which prevents all jealouſy, and gives them an opportunity to carry on their meaſures, without any particular obſervation. Beſides, Eumæus is ſtill to be kept in ignorance concerning the perſon of Ulyſ-

But thou attentive, what we order heed ;
This hapleſs ſtranger to the city lead ;
By public bounty let him there be fed,
And bleſs the hand that ſtretches forth the bread.
To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,
My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.
If this raiſe anger in the ſtranger's thought,
The pain of anger puniſhes the fault :
The very truth I undiſguis'd declare :
For what ſo eaſy as to be ſincere ?
To this Ulyſſes. What the prince requires
Of ſwift removal, ſeconds my deſires.
To want like mine, the peopled town can yield
More hopes of comfort, than the lonely field.
Nor fits my age to till the labour'd lands,
Or ſtoop to taſks a rural lord demands.

ſes; Telemachus therefore gives him a plauſible reaſon for his return; namely, that his mother may no longer be in pain for his ſafety: this likewiſe excellently contributes to deceive Eumæus. Now as the preſence of Ulyſſes in the palace is abſolutely neceſſary to bring about the ſuitors deſtruction, Telemachus orders Eumæus to conduct him thither, and by this method he comes as the friend and gueſt of Eumæus, not of Telemachus: moreover, this injunction was neceſſary: Eumæus was a perſon of ſuch generoſity, that he would have thought himſelf obliged to detain his gueſt under his own care and inſpection: nay, before he guides him towards the palace in the ſequel of this book, he tells Ulyſſes he does it ſolely in compliance with the order of Telemachus, and acts contrary to his own inclinations.

v. 14. *To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,*
My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.]

This might appear too free a declaration, if Telemachus had made it before he knew Ulyſſes; for no circumſtance could juſtify him for uſing any diſregard toward the poor and ſtranger, according to the ſtrict notions, and the ſanctity of the laws of hoſpitality amongſt the antients: but as the caſe ſtands, we are not in the leaſt ſhocked at the words of Telemachus; we know the reaſon why he thus ſpeaks; it is to conceal Ulyſſes. He is ſo far from ſhewing any particular regard to him, that he treats him with a ſeverity in ſome degree contrary to the laws of hoſpitality; by adding, that if he complains of this hard uſage, the complaint will not redreſs but increaſe his calamity.



Adieu! but ſince this ragged garb can bear
So ill, th' inclemencies of morning air,
A few hours ſpace permit me here to ſtay;
My ſteps Eumæus ſhall to town convey,
With riper beams when Phœbus warms the day.

Thus he: nor ought Telemachus reply'd,
But left the manſion with a lofty ſtride:
Schemes of revenge his pond'ring breaſt elate,
Revolving deep the ſuitors ſudden fate.
Arriving now before th' imperial hall;
He props his ſpear againſt the pillar'd wall;
Then like a lion o'er the threſhold bounds;
The marble pavement with his ſtep reſounds;
His eye firſt glanc'd where Euryclea ſpreads
With furry ſpoils of beaſts the ſplendid beds:
She ſaw, ſhe wept, ſhe ran with eager pace,
And reach'd her maſter with a long embrace.
All crowded round, the family appears
With wild entrancement, and exſtatic tears.
Swift from above deſcends the royal fair;
(Her beauteous cheeks the bluſh of Venus wear,
Chaſten'd with coy Diana's penſive air)

v. 46. *Her beauteous cheeks the bluſh of Venus wear,*
Chaſten'd with coy Diana's penſive air.]

This deſcription preſents us with a noble idea of the beauty and chaſtity of Penelope; her "perſon reſembles Venus, but Venus "with the modeſt air of Diana." Dionyſius Halicarn. takes notice of the beauty and ſoftneſs of theſe two verſes.

Ἡ δ' ἴεν ἐκ θαλάμοιο περίφρων Πηνελόπεια
Ἀρτέμιδι ἰκέλη, ἠ δὲ χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ.

When Homer (remarks that author) paints a beautiful face or an engaging object, he chuſes the ſofteſt vowels, and moſt ſmooth and flowing ſemivowels: he never clogs the pronunciation with rough ſounds, and a colliſion of untunable conſonants, but every ſyllable, every letter, conſpires to exhibit the beauty of the object he endeavours to repreſent: there are no leſs than three and thirty vowels in two lines, and no more than twenty-nine conſonants, which makes the verſes flow away with an agreeable ſmoothneſs and harmony.

Hangs o'er her ſon; in his embraces dies;
Rains kiſſes on his neck, his face, his eyes:
Few words ſhe ſpoke, tho' much ſhe had to ſay,
And ſcarce thoſe few, for tears, could force their way.
Light of my eyes! he comes! unhop'd-for joy!
Has heav'n from Pylos brought my lovely boy?
So ſnatch'd from all our cares!—Tell, haſt thou known
Thy father's fate, and tell me all thy own.
Oh deareſt, moſt rever'd of womankind!
Ceaſe with thoſe tears to melt a manly mind,
(Reply'd the prince) nor be our fates deplor'd,
From death and treaſon to thy arms reſtor'd.
Go bathe, and rob'd in white, aſcend the tow'rs;
With all thy handmaids thank th' immortal pow'rs;
To ev'ry god vow hecatombs to bleed,
And call Jove's vengeance on their guilty deed.
While to th' aſſembled council I repair;
A ſtranger ſent by heav'n attends me there;

Penelope, we ſee, embraces her ſon with the utmoſt affection: "kiſſing the lip" was not in faſhion in the days of Homer? "No "one (remarks the biſhop) ever kiſſes the lip or mouth." Penelope here kiſſes her ſon's eyes, and his head; that is, his cheek, or perhaps forehead; and Eumæus, in the preceding book, embraces the hands, eyes, and head of Telemachus. But for the comfort of the ladies, I rejoice to obſerve that all theſe were ceremonious kiſſes from a mother to a ſon, or from an inferiour to a ſuperiour: this therefore is no argument that lovers thus embraced, nor ought it to be brought as a reaſon why the preſent manner of ſalutation ſhould be abrogated. Madam Dacier has been ſo tender as to keep it a ſecret from the men, that there ever was a time in which the modern method of kiſſing was not in faſhion: ſhe highly deſerves their thanks and gratitude for it.

v. 65. *A ſtranger ſent by heav'n attends me there.*] There is a vein of ſincere piety that runs through the words and actions of Telemachus: he has no ſooner delivered his mother from her uneaſy apprehenſions concerning his ſafety, but he proceeds to another act of virtue toward Theoclymenus, whom he had taken into his protection; he performs his duty towards men and towards the gods. It is by his direction that Penelope offers up her devotions for ſucceſs, and thanks for his return. It is he who preſcribes the manner of it; namely, by waſhing the hands, in token of the purity of mind required by thoſe who ſupplicate the deities; and by put-

My new accepted gueſt I haſte to find,
Now to Piræus' honour'd charge conſign'd.
The matron heard, nor was his word in vain.
She bath'd; and rob'd in white, with all her train,
To every god vow'd hecatombs to bleed,
And call'd Jove's vengeance on the guilty deed.
Arm'd with his lance the prince then paſt the gate;
Two dogs behind, a faithful guard await;
Pallas his form with grace divine improves:
The gazing croud admires him as he moves:
Him, gath'ring round, the haughty ſuitors greet
With ſemblance fair, but inward deep deceit.
Their falſe addreſſes gen'rous he deny'd,
Paſt on, and ſat by faithful Mentor's ſide;
With Antiphus, and Halitherſes ſage,
(His father's counſellours, rever'd for age.)
Of his own fortunes, and Ulyſſes' fame,
Much aſk the ſeniors; 'till Piræus came.
The ſtranger-gueſt purſu'd him cloſe behind;
Whom when Telemachus beheld, he join'd.
He, (when Piræus aſk'd for ſlaves to bring
The gifts and treaſures of the Spartan king)
Thus thoughtful anſwer'd: Thoſe we ſhall not move,
Dark and unconſcious of the will of Jove:
We know not yet the full event of all:
Stab'd in his palace if your prince muſt fall,
Us, and our houſe if treaſon muſt o'erthrow,
Better a friend poſſeſs them, than a foe:

ting on clean garments, to ſhew the reverence and regard with which their ſouls ought to be poſſeſt when they appear before the gods. I am not ſenſible that the laſt ceremony is often mentioned in other parts of Homer; yet I doubt not but it was practiſed upon all religious ſolemnities. The moral of the whole is, that piety is a ſure way to victory: Telemachus appears every where a good man, and for this reaſon he becomes at laſt an happy one; and his calamities contribute to his glory.

If death to theſe, and vengeance heav'n decree,
Riches are welcome then, not elſe, to me.
'Till then, retain the gifts --The hero ſaid,
And in his hand the willing ſtranger led.
Then diſ-array'd, the ſhining bath they ſought,
(With unguents ſmooth) of poliſh'd marble wrought;
Obedient handmaids with aſſiſtant toil
Supply the limpid wave, and fragrant oil:
Then o'er their limbs refulgent robes they threw,
And freſh from bathing to their ſeats withdrew.
The golden ew'r a nymph attendant brings,
Repleniſh'd from the pure, tranſlucent ſprings;
With copious ſtreams that golden ew'r ſupplies
A ſilver laver of capacious ſize.
They waſh: the table, in fair order ſpread,
Is pil'd with viands and the ſtrength of bread.
Full oppoſite, before the folding gate,
The penſive mother ſits in humble ſtate;
Lowly ſhe ſat, and with dejected view
The fleecy threads her ivory fingers drew.
The prince and ſtranger ſhar'd the genial feaſt,
'Till now the rage of thirſt and hunger ceaſt
When thus the queen. My ſon! my only friend!
Say, to my mournful couch ſhall I aſcend?

v. 117. *Say, to my mournful couch*, &c.] Penelope had requeſted Telemachus to give her an account of his voyage to Pyle, and of what he had heard concerning Ulyſſes. He there waved the diſcourſe, becauſe the queen was in public with her female attendants: by this conduct the poet ſuſtains both their characters; Penelope is impatient to hear of Ulyſſes; and this agrees with the affection of a tender wife; but the diſcovery being unſeaſonable, Telemachus forbears to ſatisfy her curioſity: in which he acts like a wiſe man. Here (obſerves Euſtathius) ſhe gently reproaches him for not ſatisfying her impatience concerning her huſband; ſhe inſinuates that it is a piece of cruelty to permit her ſtill to grieve, when it is in his power to give her comfort; and this induces him to gratify her deſires. It ought to be obſerved that Homer chuſes a proper time for this relation; it was neceſſary that the ſuitors ſhould be ignorant of the ſtory of Ulyſſes; Telemachus therefore makes it when they are withdrawn to their ſports and when none were preſent but friends.

(The couch deſerted now a length of years;
The couch for ever water'd with my tears)
Say wilt thou not (ere yet the ſuitor-crew
Return, and riot ſhakes our walls a-new)
Say wilt thou not the leaſt account afford?
The leaſt glad tidings of my abſent lord?
To her the youth. We reach'd the Pylian plains,
Where Neſtor, ſhepherd of his people, reigns.
All arts of tenderneſs to him are known,
Kind to Ulyſſes' race as to his own;
No father with a fonder graſp of joy,
Strains to his boſom his long-abſent boy.
But all unknown, if yet Ulyſſes breathe,
Or glide a ſpectre in the realms beneath;
For further ſearch, his rapid ſteeds tranſport
My lengthen'd journey to the Spartan court.
There Argive Helen I beheld, whoſe charms
(So heav'n decreed) engag'd the great in arms.
My cauſe of coming told, he thus rejoin'd;
And ſtill his words live perfect in my mind.
Heav'ns! would a ſoft, inglorious, daſtard train
An abſent hero's nuptial joys profane!

v. 134. *There Argive Helen I beheld, whoſe charms (So heav'n decreed)* &c.

Euſtathius takes notice of the candid behaviour of Telemachus with reſpect to Helen: ſhe had received him courteouſly, and he teſtifies his gratitude, by aſcribing the calamities ſhe drew upon her country to the decree of heaven, not to her immodeſty: this is particularly decent in the mouth of Telemachus, becauſe he is now acquainted with his father's return; otherwiſe he could not have mentioned her name but to her diſhonour, who had been the occaſion of his death.

v. 138. *Heav'ns! would a ſoft, inglorious, daſtard train*, &c.] Theſe verſes are repeated from the fourth Odyſſey; and are not without a good effect; they cannot fail of comforting Penelope, by aſſuring her that Ulyſſes is alive, and reſtrained by Calypſo involuntarily; they give her hopes of his return, and the ſatisfaction of hearing his glory from the mouth of Menelaus. The conciſeneſs of Telemachus is likewiſe remarkable; he recapitulates in thirty-eight

So with her young, amid the woodland ſhades,
A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades,
Leaves in that fatal lair her tender fawns,
And climbs the cliff, or feeds along the lawns;
Meantime returning, with remorſeleſs ſway
The monarch ſavage rends the panting prey:
With equal fury, and with equal fame,
Shall great Ulyſſes re-aſſert his claim.
O Jove! ſupreme! whom men and gods revere;
And thou whoſe luſtre gilds the rolling ſphere!
With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid
The chief adopted by the martial maid!
Such to our wiſh the warriour ſoon reſtore,
As when, contending on the Leſbian ſhore,
His proweſs Philomelides confeſt,
And loud acclaiming Greeks the victor bleſt:
Then ſoon th' invaders of his bed, and throne,
Their love preſumptuous ſhall by death atone.
Now what you queſtion of my antient friend,
With truth I anſwer; thou the truth attend.
Learn what I heard the * ſea-born ſeer relate,
Whoſe eye can pierce the dark receſs of fate.
Sole in an iſle, impriſon'd by the main,
The ſad ſurvivor of his num'rous train,
Ulyſſes lies; detain'd by magic charms,
And preſt unwilling in Calypſo's arms.
No ſailors there, no veſſels to convey,
Nor oars to cut th' immeaſurable way——
This told Atrides, and he told no more.
Thence ſafe I voyag'd to my native ſhore.
He ceas'd; nor made the penſive queen reply,
But droop'd her head, and drew a ſecret ſigh

lines the ſubject of almoſt three books, the third, the fourth, and fifth; he ſelects every circumſtance that can pleaſe Penelope, and omits thoſe that would give her pain.

* Proteus.

When Theoclymenus the ſeer began:
Oh ſuff'ring conſort of the ſuff'ring man!
What human knowledge could, thoſe kings might tell;
But I the ſecrets of high heav'n reveal.
Before the firſt of gods be this declar'd,
Before the board whoſe bleſſings we have ſhar'd;
Witneſs the genial rites, and witneſs all
This houſe holds ſacred in her ample wall!
Ev'n now this inſtant, great Ulyſſes lay'd
At reſt, or wand'ring in his country's ſhade,
Their guilty deeds, in hearing, and in view
Secret revolves; and plans the vengeance due.
Of this ſure auguries the gods beſtow'd,
When firſt our veſſel anchor'd in your road.
Succeed thoſe omens, heav'n! (the queen rejoin'd)
So ſhall our bounties ſpeak a grateful mind;

v. 172. *When Theoclymenus the ſeer began*, &c.] It is with great judgment that the poet here introduces Theoclymenus: he is a perſon that has no direct relation to the ſtory of the Odyſſey, yet becauſe he appears accidentally in it, Homer unites him very artificially with it, that he may not appear to no purpoſe, and as an uſeleſs ornament. He here ſpeaks as an augur, and what he utters contributes to the perſeverance of Penelope in reſiſting the addreſſes of the ſuitors, by aſſuring her of the return of Ulyſſes; and conſequently in ſome degree Theoclymenus promotes the principal action. But it may be ſaid, if it was neceſſary that Penelope ſhould be informed of his return, why does not Telemachus aſſure her of it, who was fully acquainted with the truth? The anſwer is, that Penelope is not to be fully informed, but only encouraged by a general hope: Theoclymenus ſpeaks from his art, which may poſſibly be liable to errour; but Telemachus muſt have ſpoken from knowledge, which would have been contrary to the injunctions of Ulyſſes, and might have proved fatal by an unſeaſonable diſcovery: it was therefore judicious in the poet to put the aſſurance of the return of Ulyſſes into the mouth of Theoclymenus, and not of Telemachus.

There is an expreſſion in this ſpeech, which in the Greek is remarkable; literally it is to be rendered, "Ulyſſes is now ſitting or "creeping in Ithaca," ἥμενος ἢ ἕρπων; that is, Ulyſſes is returned and concealed: it is taken from the poſture of a perſon in the act of endeavouring to hide himſelf: he ſits down or creeps upon the ground. Euſtathius explains it by κρύφα, ἢ κατ' ὀρθὸν βαδίζων.

And ev'ry envy'd happineſs attend
The man, who calls Penelope his friend.
Thus commun'd they: while in the marble court
Scene of their inſolence) the lords reſort;
Athwart the ſpacious ſquare each tries his art
To whirl the diſk, or aim the miſſile dart.
Now did the hour of ſweet repaſt arrive,
And from the field the victim flocks they drive:
Medon the herald (one who pleas'd them beſt,
And honour'd with a portion of their feaſt)
To bid the banquet, interrupts their play.
Swift to the hall they haſte; aſide they lay
Their garments, and ſuccinct, the victims ſlay.

v. 192. ——— *each tries his art*
To whirl the diſk, or aim the miſſile dart.]

Euſtathius remarks that though the ſuitors were abandoned to luxury, vice, and intemperance, yet they exerciſe themſelves in laudable ſports: they toſs the quoit, and throw the javelin, which are both heroic diverſions, and form the body into ſtrength and activity. This is owing to the virtue of the age, not the perſons: ſuch ſports were faſhionable, and therefore uſed by the ſuitors, and not becauſe they were heroic. However they may inſtruct us never to give ourſelves up to idleneſs and inaction; but to make our very diverſions ſubſervient to nobler views, and turn a pleaſure into a virtue.

v. 196 *Medon the herald, one who pleas'd them beſt.*] We may obſerve that the character of Medon is very particular; he is at the ſame time a favourite of the ſuitors, and Telemachus, perſons entirely oppoſite in their intereſt. It ſeldom happens any man can pleaſe two parties, without acting an inſincere part: Atticus was indeed equally acceptable to the two factions of Cæſar and Pompey, but it was becauſe he ſeemed neutral, and acted as if they were both his friends; or rather he was a man of ſuch eminent virtues, that they eſteemed it an honour to have him thought their friend. Homer every where repreſents Medon as a perſon of integrity; he is artful, but not criminal: no doubt but he made all compliances, that conſiſted with probity, with the ſuitors diſpoſitions; by this method he ſaved Penelope more effectually than if he had ſhewed a more rigid virtue. He made himſelf maſter of their hearts by an inſinuating behaviour, and was a ſpy upon their actions. Euſtathius compares him to a buſkin that fits both legs, οἷον τις κόθορνος; he ſeems to have been an Anti-Cato, and practiſed a virtuous gaiety.

Then ſheep and goats and briſtly porkers bled,
And the proud ſteer was o'er the marble ſpread.
While thus the copious banquet they provide;
Along the road converſing ſide by ſide,
Proceed Ulyſſes and the faithful ſwain:
When thus Eumæus, gen'rous and humane.
To town, obſervant of our lord's beheſt,
Now let us ſpeed; my friend, no more my gueſt!
Yet like myſelf I wiſh'd thee here preferr'd,
Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.
But much to raiſe my maſter's wrath I fear;
The wrath of princes ever is ſevere.
Then heed his will and be our journey made
While the broad beams of Phœbus are diſplay'd,
Or ere brown ev'ning ſpreads her chilly ſhade.
Juſt thy advice, (the prudent chief rejoin'd)
And ſuch as ſuits the dictate of my mind.
Lead on: but help me to ſome ſtaff to ſtay
My feeble ſtep, ſince rugged is the way.
Acroſs his ſhoulders, then the ſcrip he flung,
Wide patch'd, and faſten'd by a twiſted thong.
A ſtaff Eumæus gave. Along the way
Cheerly they fare: behind, the keepers ſtay;

v. 210. *Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.*] Such little traits as theſe are very delightful; for the reader knowing that the perſon to whom this offer is made, is Ulyſſes, cannot fail of being diverted to ſee the honeſt and loyal Eumæus promiſing to make his maſter and king the keeper of his herds or ſtalls, σαβμῶν; and this is offered as a piece of good fortune or dignity.

v. 215. ——— —— *ere ev'ning ſpreads her chilly ſhade.*] Euſtathius gathers from theſe words, that the time of the action of the Odyſſey was in the end of autumn, or beginning of winter, when the mornings and evenings are cold: thus Ulyſſes, in the beginning of this book, makes the coldneſs of the morning an excuſe for not going with Telemachus; his rags being but an ill defence againſt it: and here Eumæus mentions the coldneſs of the evening, as a reaſon why they ſhould begin their journey in the heat of the day; ſo that it was now probably about ten of the clock, and they arrive at Ithaca at noon: from hence we may conjecture, that the lodge of Eumæus was five or ſix miles from the city: that is, about a two hours walk.

Theſe with their watchful dogs (a conſtant guard)
Supply his abſence, and attend the herd.
And now his city ſtrikes the monarch's eyes,
Alas! how chang'd! a man of miſeries;
Propt on a ſtaff, a beggar old and bare,
In rags diſhoneſt flutt'ring with the air!
Now paſs'd the rugged road, they journey down
The cavern'd way deſcending to the town,
Where from the rock, with liquid lapſe diſtills
A limpid fount; that ſpread in parting rills
Its current thence to ſerve the city brings:
An uſeful work! adorn'd by antient kings.
Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor there
In ſculptur'd ſtone immortaliz'd their care,
In marble urns receiv'd it from above,
And ſhaded with a green ſurrounding grove;

v. 224. *Theſe with their watchful dogs* ——] It is certain that if theſe little particulars had been omitted, there would have been no chaſm in the connexion; why then does Homer inſert ſuch circumſtances unneceſſarily, which, it muſt be allowed, are of no importance, and add nothing to the perfection of the ſtory? nay, they are ſuch as may be thought trivial, and unworthy the dignity of epic poetry. But, as Dacier very well obſerves, they are a kind of painting: were a painter to draw this ſubject, he would undoubtedly inſert into the piece theſe herdſmen and dogs after the manner of Homer; they are natural ornaments, and conſequently are no diſgrace either to the poet or the painter.

It is obſervable that Homer gives us an exact draught of the country; he ſets before us, as in a picture, the city, the circular grove of poplars adjacent, the fountain falling from a rock, and the altar ſacred to the nymphs, erected on the point of it. We are as it were tranſported into Ithaca, and travel with Ulyſſes and Eumæus: Homer verifies the obſervation of Horace above all poets; namely, that poetry is painting.

v. 236. *Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor* ——] Public benefactions demand public honours and acknowledgments; for this reaſon Homer makes an honourable mention of theſe three brothers. Ithaca was a ſmall iſland, and deſtitute of plenty of freſh water; this fountain therefore was a public good to the whole region about it; and has given immortality to the authors of it. They were the ſons of Pterelaus (as Euſtathius informs us;) Ithacus gave name to the country, Neritus to a mountain, and Polyctor to a place called Polyctorium.

Where ſilver alders, in high arches twin'd,
Drink the cold ſtream, and tremble to the wind.
Beneath, ſequeſter'd to the nymphs, is ſeen
A moſſy altar, deep embower'd in green;
Where conſtant vows by travellers are paid,
And holy horrours ſolemnize the ſhade.
  Here with his goats, (not vow'd to ſacred flame,
But pamper'd luxury) Melanthius came;
Two grooms attend him. With an envious look
He ey'd the ſtranger, and imperious ſpoke.
  The good old proverb how this pair fulfil!
One rogue is uſher to another ſtill.
Heav'n with a ſecret principle indu'd
Mankind, to ſeek their own ſimilitude.
Where goes the ſwine-herd with that ill-look'd gueſt?
That giant-glutton, dreadful at a feaſt!
Full many a poſt have thoſe broad ſhoulders worn,
From ev'ry great man's gate repuls'd with ſcorn;
To no brave prize aſpir'd the worthleſs ſwain,
'Twas but for ſcraps he aſk'd, and aſk'd in vain.

v. 258. *To no brave prize aſpir'd the worthleſs ſwain,*
'Twas but for ſcraps he aſk'd, and aſk'd in vain.]

Dacier is very ſingular in her interpretation of this paſſage: ſhe imagines it has a reference to the games practiſed amongſt the ſuitors, and to the rewards of the victors, which were uſually tripods and beautiful captives. "Thinkeſt thou (ſays Melanthius) "that this beggar will obtain the victory in our ſports, and that "they will give him as the reward of his valour, ſome beautiful "ſlave or ſome precious tripod?" But in Homer there is nothing that gives the leaſt countenance to this explication: he thus literally ſpeaks: this fellow "by going from door to door will meet "with correction, while he begs meanly for a few ſcraps, not for "things of price, ſuch as a captive or tripod." Euſtathius explains it as ſpoken in contempt of Ulyſſes; that he appears to be ſuch a vile perſon, as to have no ambition or hope to expect any thing better than a few ſcraps, nor to aſpire to the rewards of nobler ſtrangers, ſuch as captives or tripods. Ἀκόλοι ſays the ſame author, are the minuteſt crumbs of bread, σμικρότατοι ψωμοὶ. I am perſuaded, that the reader will ſubſcribe to the judgment of Euſtathius, if he conſiders the conſtruction, and that ἄνδρας and λέβητας are governed by αἰτίζων as effectually as ἀκόλους,

To beg, than work, he better underſtands;
Or we perhaps might take him off thy hands.
For any office could the ſlave be good,
To cleanſe the fold or help the kids to food,
If any labour thoſe big joints could learn;
Some whey to waſh his bowels, he might earn.
To cringe, to whine, his idle hands to ſpread,
Is all, by which that graceleſs maw is fed.
Yet hear me! if thy impudence but dare
Approach yon' walls, I prophecy thy fare:
Dearly, full dearly ſhalt thou buy thy bread
With many a footſtool thund'ring at thy head.
He thus: nor inſolent of word alone,
Spurn'd with his ruſtic heel his king unknown;
Spurn'd, but not mov'd: he, like a pillar ſtood,
Nor ſtirr'd an inch, contemptuous, from the road:
Doubtful, or with his ſtaff to ſtrike him dead,
Or greet the pavement with his worthleſs head.

and therefore muſt refer to the ſame act of begging, not of claiming by victory in the games; αἰτίζων is not a word that can here expreſs a reward, but only a charity: beſides, would it not be abſurd to ſay that a beggar goes from door to door aſking alms, and not rewards beſtowed upon victors in public exerciſes? The words πολλῆσι φλιῇσι make the ſenſe general, they denote the life of a beggar, which is to go from door to door, and conſequently they ought not to be confined ſolely to the ſuitors, and if not, they can have no reference to any games, or to any rewards beſtowed upon ſuch occaſions. Beſides, it is ſcarce to be conceived that Melanthius could think this beggar capable of being admitted into the company, much leſs into the diverſion of the ſuitors, who were all perſons of high birth and ſtation. It is true, lib. xxi. Ulyſſes is permitted to try the bow, but this is through the peculiar grace of Telemachus, who knew the beggar to be Ulyſſes: and entirely contrary to their injunctions.

From this paſſage we may correct an errour in Heſychius: ἄορες (ſays he) are γυναῖκες ἢ τρίποδες: the ſentence is evidently maimed) for Heſychius undoubtedly thus wrote it, ἄορες γυναικες λέγονται, for thus (adds he) Homer uſes it:

——— οὐκ ἄορας οὐδὲ λέβητας.

That is (ſays Heſychius) ἢ γυναῖκας οὐδὲ τρίποδες, referring to this verſe of the Odyſſey.

Short was that doubt; to quell his rage inur'd,
The hero ſtood ſelf-conquer'd, and endur'd.
But hateful of the wretch, Eumæus heav'd
His hands obteſting, and this pray'r conceiv'd.
Daughters of Jove! who from th' ætherial bow'rs
Deſcend to ſwell the ſprings, and feed the flow'rs!
Nymphs of this fountain! to whoſe ſacred names
Our rural victims mount in blazing flames!
To whom Ulyſſes' piety preferr'd
The yearly firſtlings of his flock, and herd;
Succeed my wiſh; your votary reſtore:
Oh be ſome god his convoy to our ſhore!
Due pains ſhall puniſh then this ſlave's offence,
And humble all his airs of inſolence,
Who proudly ſtalking, leaves the herds at large,
Commences courtier, and neglects his charge.
What mutters he? (Melanthius ſharp rejoins)
This crafty miſcreant big with dark deſigns?
The day ſhall come; nay, 'tis already near,
When ſlave! to ſell thee at a price too dear,

v. 279. *The hero ſtood ſelf-conquer'd, and endur'd.*] Homer excellently ſuſtains the character of Ulyſſes; he is a man of patience, and maſter of all his paſſions; he is here miſuſed by one of his own ſervants, yet is ſo far from returning the injury, that he ſtifles the ſenſe of it, without ſpeaking one word: it is true he is deſcribed as having a conflict in his ſoul; but this is no derogation to his character: not to feel like a man is inſenſibility, not virtue; but to repreſs the emotions of the heart, and keep them within the bounds of moderation, this argues wiſdom, and turns an injury into a virtue and glory. There is an excellent contraſt between the benevolent Eumæus and the inſolent Melanthius. Eumæus reſents the outrage of Melanthius more than Ulyſſes; he is moved with indignation, but how does he expreſs it? Not by railing, but by an appeal to heaven in a prayer: a conduct worthy to be imitated in more enlightened ages. The word ἀγλαΐας here bears a peculiar ſignification: it does not imply voluptuouſneſs as uſually, but pride, and means that Ulyſſes would ſpoil his haughty airs, if he ſhould ever return: this interpretation agrees with what follows, where Eumæus reproaches him for deſpiſing his rural charge, and aſpiring to politeneſs, or, as we expreſs it, to be a man of the town.

Muſt be my care; and hence tranſport thee o'er,
(A load and ſcandal to this happy ſhore.)
Oh! that as ſurely great Apollo's dart,
Or ſome brave ſuitor's ſword, might pierce the heart
Of the proud ſon; as that we ſtand this hour
In laſting ſafety from the father's pow'r.
So ſpoke the wretch; but ſhunning farther fray,
Turn'd his proud ſtep, and left them on their way.
Straight to the feaſtful palace he repair'd,
Familiar enter'd, and the banquet ſhar'd;
Beneath Eurymachus, his patron lord,
He took his place, and plenty heap'd the board.
Meantime they heard, ſoft-circling in the ſky,
Sweet airs aſcend, and heav'nly minſtrelſie;
(For Phemius to the lyre attun'd the ſtrain:)
Ulyſſes hearken'd, then addreſt the ſwain.
Well may this palace admiration claim,
Great, and reſpondent to the maſter's fame!
Stage above ſtage th' imperial ſtructure ſtands,
Holds the chief honours and the town commands:
High walls and battlements the courts incloſe,
And the ſtrong gates defy a hoſt of foes.

v. 308. *Beneath Eurymachus ——— He took his place———*] We may gather from hence the truth of an obſervation formerly made, That Melanthius, Eumæus, &c. were perſons of diſtinction, and their offices poſts of honour: we ſee Melanthius, who had charge of the goats of Ulyſſes, is a companion for princes.

The reaſon why Melanthius in particular aſſociates himſelf with Eurymachus is, an intrigue which that prince holds with Melantho his ſiſter, as appears from the following book. There is a confederacy and league between them, and we find they all ſuffer condign puniſhment in the end of the Odyſſey.

v. 318. *High walls and battlements*, &c.] We have here a very particular draught or plan of the Palace of Ulyſſes; it is a kind of caſtle, at once deſigned for ſtrength and magnificence: this we may gather from ὑπεροπλίσσαι ſo, which Heſychius explains by ὑπερπεδῆσαι, ὑπερβῆναι, not eaſily to be ſurmounted, or forced by arms.

Homer artfully introduces Ulyſſes ſtruck with wonder at the beauty of the palace; this is done to confirm Eumæus in the

Far other cares its dwellers now employ :
The throng'd aſſembly, and the feaſt of joy :
I ſee the ſmokes of ſacrifice aſpire,
And hear (what graces ev'ry feaſt) the lyre.
Then thus Eumæus. Judge we which were beſt ;
Amidſt yon' revellers a ſudden gueſt
Chuſe you to mingle, while behind I ſtay ?
Or I firſt ent'ring introduce the way ?
Wait for a ſpace without, but wait not long ;
This is the houſe of violence and wrong :
Some rude inſult thy rev'rend age may bear ;
For like their lawleſs lords, the ſervants are.
Juſt is, oh friend ! thy caution, and addreſt
(Reply'd the chief) to no unheedful breaſt ;
The wrongs and injuries of baſe mankind
Freſh to my ſenſe, and always in my mind.
The bravely-patient to no fortune yields ;
On rolling oceans, and in fighting fields,
Storms have I paſt, and many a ſtern debate ;
And now in humbler ſcene ſubmit to fate.
What cannot want ? the beſt ſhe will expoſe,
And I am learn'd in all her train of woes ;
She fills with navies, hoſts, and loud alarms
The ſea, the land, and ſhakes the world with arms !
Thus, near the gates conferring as they drew,
Argus, the dog, his antient maſter knew ;

opinion that Ulyſſes is really the beggar he appears to be, and a perfect ſtranger among the Ithacans : thus alſo when he complains of hunger, he ſpeaks the language of a beggar, as Euſtathius remarks, to perſuade Eumæus that he takes his journey to the court, ſolely out of want and hunger.

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He, not unconſcious of the voice, and tread,
Lifts to the ſound his ear, and rears his head;
Bred by Ulyſſes, nouriſh'd at his board,
But ah! not fated long to pleaſe his lord!
To him, his ſwiftneſs and his ſtrength were vain;
The voice of glory call'd him o'er the main.
'Till then in ev'ry ſilvan chace renown'd,
With Argus, Argus, rung the woods around;
With him the youth purſu'd the goat or fawn,
Or trac'd the mazy leveret o'er the lawn.
Now left to man's ingratitude he lay,
Unhous'd, neglected in the public way.
And where on heaps the rich manure was ſpread,
Obſcene with reptiles, took his ſordid bed.
He knew his lord; he knew, and ſtrove to meet;
In vain he ſtrove, to crawl, and kiſs his feet;

into the Iliad: it is writ in a nobler ſtyle, and diſtinguiſhed by a boldneſs of ſentiments and diction; whereas the Odyſſey deſcends to the familiar, and is calculated more for common than heroic life. What Homer ſays of Argus is very natural, and I do not know any thing more beautiful or more affecting in the whole poem: I dare appeal to every perſon's judgment, if Argus be not as juſtly and properly repreſented, as the nobleſt figure in it. It is certain that the vermin which Homer mentions would debaſe our poetry, but in the Greek that very word is noble and ſonorous, Κυνοραϊστέων: but how is the objection concerning the dunghill to be anſwered? We muſt have recourſe to the ſimplicity of manners amongſt the antients, who thought nothing mean that was of uſe to life. Ithaca was a barren country, full of rocks and mountains, and owed its fertility chiefly to cultivation, and for this reaſon ſuch circumſtantial cares were neceſſary. It is true ſuch a deſcription is now more proper for a peaſant than a king, but antiently it was no diſgrace for a king to perform with his own hands, what is now left only to peaſants. We read of a dictator taken from the plough, and why may not a king as well manure his field as plough it, without receding from his dignity? Virgil has put the ſame thing into a precept:

"Ne ſaturare fimo pingui pudeat ſola."

v. 361. *In vain he ſtrove, to crawl, and kiſs his feet.*] It may ſeem that this circumſtance was inſerted caſually, or at leaſt only to ſhew the age and infirmity of Argus: but there is a further in-

Yet (all he could) his tail, his ears, his eyes
Salute his maſter, and confeſs his joys.
Soft pity touch'd the mighty maſter's ſoul,
Adown his cheek a tear unbidden ſtole,
Stole unperceiv'd; he turn'd his head and dry'd
The drop humane: then thus impaſſion'd cry'd.
What noble beaſt in this abandon'd ſtate
Lies here all helpleſs at Ulyſſes' gate?
His bulk and beauty ſpeak no vulgar praiſe;
If, as he ſeems, he was in better days,
Some care his age deſerves: or was he priz'd
For worthleſs beauty! therefore now deſpis'd?
Such dogs, and men there are, meer things of ſtate,
And always cheriſh'd by their friends, the great.

lent in it: if the dog had run to Ulyſſes and fawned upon him, it would have raiſed a ſtrong ſuſpicion in Eumæus that he was not ſuch a ſtranger to the Ithacans as he pretended, but ſome perſon in diſguiſe; and this might have occaſioned an unſeaſonable diſcovery. Euſtathius.

v. 364. *Soft pity touch'd the mighty maſter's ſoul.*] I confeſs myſelf touched with the tenderneſs of theſe tears in Ulyſſes; I would willingly think that they proceed from a better principle than the weakneſs of human nature, and are an inſtance of a really virtuous, and compaſſionate diſpoſition.

——— ἀγαθοὶ δ' ἀϊδάκρυες ἄνδρες.

"Good men are eaſily moved to tears:" in my judgment Ulyſſes appears more amiable while he weeps over his faithful dog, than when he drives an army of enemies before him: that ſhews him to be a great hero, this a good man. It was undoubtedly an inſtance of an excellent diſpoſition in one of the fathers who prayed for the "grace of tears."

"———————molliſſima corda
"Humano generi dare ſe natura fatetur,
"Quæ lachrymas dedit; hæc noſtri pars optima ſenſus."
Juv. Sat. xv.

And Dryden,

Each gentle mind the ſoft infection felt,
For richeſt metals are moſt apt to melt.

v. 374. *Such dogs, and men there are, mere things of ſtate,*
And always cheriſh'd by their friends, the great.]

Not Argus ſo, (Eumæus thus rejoin'd)
But ſerv'd a maſter of a nobler kind,
Who never, never ſhall behold him more!
Long, long ſince periſh'd on a diſtant ſhore!
Oh had you ſeen him, vig'rous, bold and young,
Swift as a ſtag, and as a lion ſtrong;
Him no fell ſavage on the plain withſtood,
None 'ſcap'd him, boſom'd in the gloomy wood;
His eye how piercing, and his ſcent how true,
To winde the vapour in the tainted dew!
Such, when Ulyſſes left his natal coaſt;
Now years un-nerve him, and his lord is loſt!
The women keep the gen'rous creature bare,
A ſleek and idle race is all their care:
The maſter gone, the ſervants what reſtrains?
Or dwells humanity where riot reigns?
Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day
Makes man a ſlave, takes half his worth away.

It is in the Greek ἄνακτες, or "kings;" but the word is not to be taken in too ſtrict a ſenſe; it implies "all perſons of diſtinc-"tion," or οἰκοδεσπόται, like the word rex in Horace.

"Regibus hic mos eſt ubi equos mercantur."

And reginæ in Terence (as Dacier obſerves) is uſed in the ſame manner.

"————Eunuchum porro dixti velle te:
"Quia ſolæ utuntur his reginæ."

v. 392. ———————— *whatever day*
Makes man a ſlave, takes half his worth away.]

This is a very remarkable ſentence, and commonly found to be true. Longinus in his enquiry into the decay of human wit, quotes it. "Servitude, be it never ſo juſtly eſtabliſhed, is a kind of "priſon, wherein the ſoul ſhrinks in ſome meaſure, and dimi-"niſhes by conſtraint: it has the ſame effect with the boxes in "which dwarfs are incloſed, which not only hinder the body from "its growth, but make it leſs by the conſtriction. It is obſervable "that all the great orators flouriſhed in republics, and indeed "what is there that raiſes the ſouls of great men more than li-"berty? In other governments men commonly become inſtead "of orators, pompous flatterers: a man born in ſervitude may

This ſaid, the honeſt herdſman ſtrode before:
The muſing monarch pauſes at the door:
The dog whom fate had granted to behold
His lord, when twenty tedious years had roll'd,
Takes a laſt look, and having ſeen him, dies;
So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes!
And now Telemachus, the firſt of all,
Obſerv'd Eumæus ent'ring in the hall;
Diſtant he ſaw, acroſs the ſhady dome;
Then gave a ſign, and beckon'd him to come:
There ſtood an empty ſeat, where late was plac'd
In order due, the ſteward of the feaſt,

" be capable of other ſciences; but no ſlave can ever be an orator;
" for while the mind is depreſt and broken by ſlavery, it will ne-
" ver dare to think or ſay any thing bold and noble; all the vi-
" gour evaporates, and it remains as it were confined in a priſon."
" Etiam fera animalia, ſi clauſa teneas virtutis obliviſcuntur."
Tacit. Hiſt. lib. iv.

Theſe verſes are quoted in Plato, lib. vi. De Legibus, but ſomewhat differently from our editions.

Ἥμισυ γὰρ τε νόου ἀπομείρεται εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς
Ἀνδρῶν ὅς κεν δὴ, &c.

However this aphoriſm is to be underſtood only generally, not univerſally: Eumæus who utters it is an inſtance to the contrary, who retains his virtue in a ſtate of ſubjection; and Plato ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe, aſſerting that ſome ſlaves have been found of ſuch virtue as to be preferred to a ſon or brother; and have often preſerved their maſters and their families.

v. 399. *So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes!*] It has been a queſtion what occaſioned the death of Argus, at the inſtant he ſaw Ulyſſes: Euſtathius imputes it to the joy he felt at the ſight of his maſter. But there has another objection been ſtarted againſt Homer, for aſcribing ſo long a life as twenty years to Argus, and that dogs never ſurpaſs the fifteenth year; but this is an errour; Ariſtotle affirms, that ſome dogs live two and twenty, and other naturaliſts ſubſcribe to his judgment. Euſtathius tells us, that other writers agree, that ſome dogs live twenty-four years. Pliny thus writes, " Canes Laconici vivunt annis denis, fœminæ duo-
" denis, cætera genera quindecim annos, aliquando viginti."
Madam Dacier mentions ſome of her own knowledge that lived twenty-three years: and the tranſlator, not to fall ſhort of theſe illuſtrious examples, has known one that died at twenty-two big with puppies.

(Who now was buſied carving round the board)
Eumæus took, and plac'd it near his lord.
Before him inſtant was the banquet ſpread,
And the bright baſket pil'd with loaves of bread.
Next came Ulyſſes, lowly at the door,
A figure deſpicable, old, and poor,
In ſqualid veſt with many a gaping rent,
Propt on a ſtaff, and trembling as he went.
Then, reſting on the threſhold of the gate,
Againſt a cypreſs pillar lean'd his weight;
(Smooth'd by the workman to a poliſh'd plain)
The thoughtful ſon beheld, and call'd his ſwain:
Theſe viands, and this bread, Eumæus! bear,
And let yon' mendicant our plenty ſhare:
Then let him circle round the ſuitors board,
And try the bounty of each gracious lord.
Bold let him aſk, encourag'd thus by me;
How ill, alas! do want and ſhame agree?

v. 423. *How ill, alas! do want and ſhame agree?*] We are not to imagine that Homer is here recommending immodeſty; but to underſtand him as ſpeaking of a decent aſſurance, in oppoſition to a faulty ſhame or baſhfulneſs. The verſe in the Greek is remarkable.

Αἰδῶς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθὴ κεχρημένῳ ἀνδρὶ πτοίκτῃ.

A perſon of great learning has obſerved there is a tautology in the three laſt words; in "a beggar that wants:" as if the very notion of a beggar did not imply want. Indeed Plato, who cites this verſe in his Charmides, uſes another word inſtead of πτοίκτῃ, and inſerts παρεῖναι. Heſiod likewiſe who makes uſe of the ſame line, inſtead of πτοίκτῃ reads κομιζεῖ, which would almoſt induce us to believe that they thought there was a tautology in Homer. It has therefore been conjectured, that the word πτοίκτης ſhould be inſerted in the place of πτοίκτῃ; I am ſorry that the conſtruction will not allow it; that word is of the maſculine gender, and ἀγαθὴ which is of the feminine cannot agree with it. We may indeed ſubſtitute ἀγαθὸς, and then the ſenſe will be "baſhfulneſs "is no good petitioner for a beggar;" but this muſt be done without authority. We muſt therefore thus underſtand Homer; "Too "much modeſty is not good for a poor man, who lives by begging,"

His lord's command the faithful ſervant bears;
The ſeeming beggar anſwers with his pray'rs.
Bleſt be Telemachus! in ev'ry deed
Inſpire him Jove! in ev'ry wiſh ſucceed!
This ſaid, the portion from his ſon convey'd
With ſmiles receiving on his ſcrip he lay'd.
Long as the minſtrel ſwept the ſounding wire,
He fed, and ceas'd when ſilence held the lyre.
Soon as the ſuitors from the banquet roſe,
Minerva prompts the man of mighty woes

πτοίκλη; and this ſolution clears the verſe from the tautology, for a man may be in want, and not be a beggar; or (as Homer expreſſes it) κεχρημένος, and yet not πτοίκλης.

v. 433. *Minerva prompts*, &c.] This is a circumſtance that occurs almoſt in every book of the Odyſſey, and Pallas has been thought to mean no more than the inherent wiſdom of Ulyſſes, which guides all his actions upon all emergencies: it is not impoſſible but the poet might intend to inculcate, that the wiſdom of man is the gift of heaven, and a bleſſing from the gods. But then is it not a derogation to Ulyſſes, to think nothing but what the goddeſs dictates? and a reſtraint of human liberty, to act ſolely by the impulſe of a deity? Plutarch in his life of Coriolanus excellently ſolves this difficulty; "Men (obſerves that author) are "ready to cenſure and deſpiſe the poet, as if he deſtroyed the uſe "of reaſon, and the freedom of their choice, by continually "aſcribing every ſuggeſtion of heart to the influence of a goddeſs: "whereas he introduces a deity not to take away the liberty of "the will, but as moving it to act with freedom; the deity does "not work in us the inclinations, but only offers the object to "our minds, from whence we conceive the impulſe, and form "our reſolutions." However theſe influences do not make the action involuntary, but only give a beginning to ſpontaneous operations; for we muſt either remove God from all manner of cauſality, or confeſs that he inviſibly aſſiſts us by a ſecret co-operation. For it is abſurd to imagine that the help he lends us, conſiſts in faſhioning the poſtures of the body or directing the corporeal motions: but in influencing our ſouls, and exciting the inward faculties into action by ſecret impulſes from above; or, on the contrary, by raiſing an averſion in the ſoul, to reſtrain us from action. It is true in ordinary affairs of life, in matters that are brought about by the ordinary way of reaſon, Homer aſcribes the execution of them to human performance, and frequently repreſents his heroes calling a council in their own breaſts, and acting according to the dictates of reaſon: but in actions unaccountably daring, of a tranſcendent nature, there they are ſaid to be carried

To tempt their bounties with a ſuppliant's art,
And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart;
(Not but his ſoul, reſentful as humane,
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train)
With ſpeaking eyes, and voice of plaintiff ſound,
Humble he moves, imploring all around.

away by a divine impulſe or enthuſiaſm, and it is no longer human reaſon, but a god that influences the ſoul.

I have already obſerved, that Homer makes uſe of machines ſometimes merely for ornament; this place is an inſtance of it: here is no action of an uncommon nature performed, and yet Pallas directs Ulyſſes: Plutarch very juſtly obſerves, that whenever the Heroes of Homer execute any prodigious exploit of valour, he continually introduces a deity, who aſſiſts in the performance of it; but it is alſo true, that to ſhew the dependance of man upon the aſſiſtance of heaven, he frequently aſcribes the common dictates of wiſdom to the goddeſs of it. If we take the act here inſpired by Minerva, as it lies nakedly in Homer, it is no more than a bare command to beg: an act, that needs not the wiſdom of a goddeſs to command: but we are to underſtand it as a direction to Ulyſſes how to behave before the ſuitors upon his firſt appearance, how to carry on his diſguiſe ſo artfully as to prevent all ſuſpicions, and take his meaſures ſo effectually as to work his own re-eſtabliſhment: in this light, the command becomes worthy of a goddeſs: the act of begging is only the method by which he carries on his deſign; the conſequence of it is the main point in view, namely, the ſuitors deſtruction. The reſt is only the ſtratagem, by which he obtains the victory.

v. 435. *And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart;*
(Not but his ſoul, reſentful as humane,
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train).]

A ſingle virtue, or act of humanity, is not a ſufficient atonemen for a whole life of inſolence and oppreſſion; ſo that although ſome of the ſuitors ſhould be found leſs guilty than the reſt, yet they are ſtill too guilty to deſerve impunity.

v. 438. *With ſpeaking eyes, and voice of plaintive ſound,*
Humble he moves, &c.]

Homer inſerts this particularity to ſhew the complying nature of Ulyſſes in all fortunes; he is every where πολύτροπος, it is his diſtinguiſhing character in the firſt verſe of the Odyſſey, and it is viſible in every part of it. He is an artiſt in the trade of begging, as Euſtathius obſerves, and knows how to become the loweſt, as well as the higheſt ſtation.

The proud feel pity, and relief beſtow,
With ſuch an image touch'd of human woe;
Enquiring all, their wonder they confeſs,
And eye the man, majeſtic in diſtreſs.
While thus they gaze and queſtion with their eyes,
The bold Melanthius to their thought replies.
My lords! this ſtranger of gigantic port
The good Eumæus uſher'd to your court.
Full well I mark'd the features of his face,
Tho' all unknown his clime, or noble race.
And is this preſent, ſwineherd! of thy hand?
Bring'ſt thou theſe vagrants to infeſt the land?
(Returns Antinous with retorted eye)
Objects uncouth! to check the genial joy.
Enough of theſe our court already grace,
Of giant ſtomach, and of famiſh'd face.
Such gueſts Eumæus to his country brings,
To ſhare our feaſt, and lead the life of kings.
To whom the hoſpitable ſwain rejoin'd:
Thy paſſion, prince, belies thy knowing mind.
Who calls, from diſtant nations to his own,
The poor, diſtinguiſh'd by their wants alone?
Round the wide world are ſought thoſe men divine
Who public ſtructures raiſe, or who deſign;

Homer adds, that the ſuitors were ſtruck with wonder at the ſight of Ulyſſes. That is (ſays Euſtathius) becauſe they never had before ſeen him in Ithaca, and concluded him to be a foreigner. But I rather think it is a compliment Homer pays to his hero to repreſent his port and figure to be ſuch, as though a beggar, ſtruck them with aſtoniſhment.

v. 462. *Round the wide world are ſought thoſe men divine*,&c.] This is an evidence of the great honour antiently paid to perſons eminent in mechanic arts: the architect, and public artiſans, δημιεργοὶ, are joined with the prophet, phyſician, and poet, who were eſteemed almoſt with a religious veneration, and looked upon as public bleſſings. Honour was antiently given to men in proportion to the benefits they brought to ſociety: a uſeleſs great man is a burthen to the earth, while the meaneſt artiſan is beneficial to his fellow-creatures, and uſeful in his generation.

Thoſe to whoſe eyes the gods their ways reveal,
Or bleſs with ſalutary arts to heal;
But chief to poets ſuch reſpect belongs,
By rival nations courted for their ſongs;
Theſe ſtates invite and mighty kings admire,
Wide as the ſun diſplays his vital fire.
It is not ſo with want! how few that feed
A wretch unhappy, merely for his need?
Unjuſt to me and all that ſerve the ſtate,
To love Ulyſſes is to raiſe thy hate.
For me, ſuffice the approbation won
Of my great miſtreſs, and her god-like ſon.
To him Telemachus. No more incenſe
The man by nature prone to inſolence:
Injurious minds juſt anſwers but provoke—
Then turning to Antinous, thus he ſpoke.
Thanks to thy care! whoſe abſolute command
Thus drives the ſtranger from our court and land.
Heav'n bleſs its owner with a better mind!
From envy free, to charity inclin'd.
This both Penelope and I afford:
Then, prince! be bounteous of Ulyſſes' board.
To give another's is thy hand ſo ſlow?
So much more ſweet, to ſpoil, than to beſtow?
Whence, great Telemachus! this lofty ſtrain?
(Antinous cries with inſolent diſdain)
Portions like mine if ev'ry ſuitor gave,
Our walls this twelvemonth ſhould not ſee the ſlave.
He ſpoke, and lifting high above the board
His pond'rous footſtool, ſhook it at his lord.
The reſt with equal hand conferr'd the bread;
He fill'd his ſcrip, and to the threſhold ſped;
But firſt before Antinous ſtopt, and ſaid.
Beſtow my friend! thou doſt not ſeem the worſt
Of all the Greeks, but prince-like and the firſt;

v. 497. *Beſtow my friend!* &c.] Ulyſſes here acts with a pru-

Then as in dignity, be firſt in worth,
And I ſhall praiſe thee thro' the boundleſs earth.
Once I enjoy'd in luxury of ſtate
Whate'er gives man the envy'd name of great;
Wealth, ſervants, friends, were mine in better days;
And hoſpitality was then my praiſe;
In ev'ry ſorrowing ſoul I pour'd delight,
And poverty ſtood ſmiling in my ſight.
But Jove, all-governing, whoſe only will
Determines fate, and mingles good with ill,
Sent me (to puniſh my purſuit of gain)
With roving pirates o'er th' Ægyptian main:
By Ægypt's ſilver flood our ſhips we moor;
Our ſpies commiſſion'd ſtraight the coaſt explore;
But impotent of mind, with lawleſs will
The country ravage, and the natives kill.
The ſpreading clamour to their city flies,
And horſe and foot in mingled tumult riſe:
The red'ning dawn reveals the hoſtile fields
Horrid with briſtly ſpears, and gleaming ſhields:

dent diſſimulation; he pretends not to have underſtood the irony of Antinous, nor to have obſerved his preparation to ſtrike him: and therefore proceeds as if he apprehended no danger. This at once ſhews the patience of Ulyſſes, who is inured to ſufferings, and gives a foundation for the puniſhment of Antinous in the concluſion of the Odyſſey.

It is obſervable, that Ulyſſes gives his own hiſtory in the ſame words as in the fourteenth book, yet varies from it in the concluſion; he there ſpoke to Eumæus, and Eumæus is here preſent, and hears the ſtory: how is it then that he does not obſerve the falſification of Ulyſſes, and conclude him to be an impoſtor? Euſtathius labours for an anſwer; he imagines that Eumæus was inadvertent, or had forgot the former relation, and yet aſſerts that the reaſon why Ulyſſes tells the ſame hiſtory in part to Antinous, proceeds from a fear of detection in Eumæus. I would rather imagine that Ulyſſes makes the deviation, truſting to the judgment of Eumæus, who might conclude that there was ſome good reaſon why he forbears to let Antinous into the full hiſtory of his life; eſpecially, becauſe he was an enemy both to Ulyſſes and Eumæus: he might therefore eaſily reflect, that the difference of his ſtory aroſe from prudence and deſign, rather than from impoſture and falſhood.

Jove thunder'd on their ſide: our guilty head
We turn'd to flight; the gath'ring vengeance ſpread
On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lay dead.
Some few the foes in ſervitude detain;
Death ill exchang'd for bondage and for pain!
Unhappy me a Cyprian took a-board,
And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty lord:
Hither, to 'ſcape his chains, my courſe I ſteer
Still curſt by fortune, and inſulted here!
To whom Antinous thus his rage expreſt.
What god has plagu'd us with this gormand gueſt?
Unleſs at diſtance, wretch! thou keep behind,
Another iſle, than Cyprus more unkind;
Another Ægypt, ſhalt thou quickly find.
From all thou beg'ſt, a bold audacious ſlave;
Nor all can give ſo much as thou canſt crave.
Nor wonder I, at ſuch profuſion ſhown,
Shameleſs they give, who give what's not their own.
The chief, retiring. Souls like that in thee,
Ill ſuit ſuch forms of grace and dignity.
Nor will that hand to utmoſt need afford
The ſmalleſt portion of a waſteful board,

v. 525. *And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty lord.*] We are not to ſearch too exactly into hiſtoric truth among the fictions of Poetry; but it is very probable that this Dmetor was really king of Cyprus. Euſtathius is of this opinion; but it may be objected, that Cinyras was king of Cyprus in the time of Ulyſſes. Thus lib. xi. Iliad.

The beaming cuiraſs next adorn'd his breaſt;
The fame which once King Cinyras poſſeſt;
The fame of Greece, and her aſſembled hoſt,
Had reach'd that monarch on the Cyprian coaſt.

The anſwer is, there were almoſt twenty years elapſed ſince the mention of this breaſt-plate of Cinyras; this King therefore being dead, Dmetor poſſeſt the Cyprian throne.

v. 532. *Another Egypt*, &c.] This paſſage is a full demonſtration that the country was called Egypt in the days of Homer, as well as the River Nilus; for in the ſpeech he uſes Αἴγυπτος in the maſculine gender to denote the river, and here he calls it πίκρὴν Αἴγυπτον in the feminine, to ſhew that he ſpeaks of the country: the former word agreeing with ποτάμος, the latter with γαῖα.

Whoſe luxury whole patrimonies ſweeps,
Yet ſtarving want, amidſt the riot, weeps.
The haughty ſuitor with reſentment burns,
And ſow'rly ſmiling, this reply returns.
Take that, ere yet thou quit this princely throng:
And dumb for ever be thy ſland'rous tongue!
He ſaid, and high the whirling tripod flung.
His ſhoulder-blade receiv'd th' ungentle ſhock;
He ſtood, and mov'd not, like a marble rock:
But ſhook his thoughtful head, nor more complain'd,
Sedate of ſoul, his character ſuſtain'd,
And inly form'd revenge: then back withdrew;
Before his feet the well-fill'd ſcrip he threw,
And thus with ſemblance mild addreſt the crew.
May what I ſpeak your princely minds approve,
Ye peers and rivals in this noble love!
Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cauſe;
If when the ſword our country's quarrel draws,

v. 557. *Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cauſe.*] The reaſoning of Ulyſſes in the original is not without ſome obſcurity: for how can it be affirmed, that it is no great affliction to have our property invaded, and to be wounded in the defence of it? The beggar who ſuffers for aſking an alms, has no injury done him, except the violence offered to his perſon; but it is a double injury, to ſuffer both in our perſons and properties. We muſt therefore ſuppoſe that Ulyſſes means, that the importance of the cauſe, when our rights are invaded, is equal to the danger, and that we ought to ſuffer wounds, or even death, in defence of it; and that a brave man grieves not at ſuch laudable adventures. Or perhaps Ulyſſes ſpeaks only with reſpect to Antinous, and means that it is a greater injury to offer violence to the poor and the ſtranger, than to perſons of greater fortune and ſtation.

Euſtathius gives a deeper meaning to the ſpeech of Ulyſſes; he applies it to his preſent condition, and it is the ſame as if he had ſaid openly; it would be no great matter if I had been wounded in defence of my palace, and other properties, but to ſuffer only for aſking an alms, this is a deep affliction. So that Ulyſſes ſpeaks in general, but intends his own particular condition; and the import of the whole is, I grieve to ſuffer, not upon any weighty account, but only for being poor and hungry.

Or if defending what is juſtly dear,
From Mars impartial ſome broad wound we bear;
The gen'rous motive dignifies the ſcar.
But for mere want, how hard to ſuffer wrong?
Want brings enough of other ills along!
Yet if injuſtice never be ſecure,
If fiends revenge, and gods aſſert the poor,
Death ſhall lay low the proud aggreſſor's head,
And make the duſt Antinous' bridal bed.
Peace, wretch! and eat thy bread without offence,
(The ſuitor cry'd) or force ſhall drag thee hence,
Scourge thro' the public ſtreet, and caſt thee there,
A mangled carcaſe for the hounds to tear.
His furious deed the gen'ral anger mov'd,
All, ev'n the worſt, condemn'd: and ſome reprov'd.
Was ever chief for wars like theſe renown'd?
Ill fits the ſtranger and the poor to wound.
Unbleſt thy hand! if in this low diſguiſe
Wander, perhaps, ſome inmate of the ſkies;
They (curious oft' of mortal actions) deign
In forms like theſe, to round the earth and main,
Juſt and unjuſt recording in their mind,
And with ſure eyes inſpecting all mankind.
Telemachus abſorpt in thought ſevere,
Nouriſh'd deep anguiſh, tho' he ſhed no tear;

v. 578. *They (curious oft' of mortal actions)* &c.] We have already obſerved, that it was the opinion of the antients, that the gods frequently aſſumed an human ſhape. Thus Ovid of Jupiter.

——— —— "Summo delabor Olympo,
"Et Deus humanâ luſtro ſub imagine terras."

I refer the reader to the objections of Plato, mentioned in the preceding book. It is obſervable, that Homer puts this remarkable truth into the mouth of the ſuitors, to ſhew that it was certain and undeniable, when it is atteſted even by ſuch perſons as had no piety or religion.

v. 582. *Telemachus———*
Nouriſh'd deep anguiſh, tho' he ſhed no tear.]
This is ſpoken with particular judgment; Telemachus is here to

But the dark brow of ſilent ſorrow ſhook:
While thus his mother to her virgins ſpoke.
" On him and his may the bright god of day
" That baſe, inhoſpitable blow repay!"
The nurſe replies: " If Jove receives my pray'r,
" Not one ſurvives to breathe to-morrow's air."
All, all are foes, and miſchief is their end;
Antinous moſt to gloomy death a friend;
(Replies the queen) the ſtranger begg'd their grace,
And melting pity ſoften'd ev'ry face;
From ev'ry other hand redreſs he found,
But fell Antinous anſwer'd with a wound.
Amidſt her maids thus ſpoke the prudent queen,
Then bade Eumæus call the pilgrim in.
Much of th' experienc'd man I long to hear,
If or his certain eye, or liſt'ning ear
Have learn'd the fortunes of my wand'ring lord?
Thus ſhe, and good Eumæus took the word.
A private audience if thy grace impart,
The ſtranger's words may eaſe the royal heart.
His ſacred eloquence in balm diſtils,
And the ſooth'd heart with ſecret pleaſure fills.
Three days have ſpent their beams, three nights have run
Their ſilent journey, ſince his tale begun,
Unfiniſh'd yet; and yet I thirſt to hear!
As when ſome heav'n-taught poet charms the ear,

act the part of a wiſe man, not of a tender ſon; he reſtrains his tears leſt they ſhould betray his father, it being improbable that he ſhould weep for a vagabond and beggar. We find he has profited by the inſtructions of Ulyſſes, and practiſes the injunctions given in the former book.

——If ſcorn inſult my reverend age,
Bear it, my ſon; repreſs thy riſing rage.
If outrag'd, ceaſe that outrage to repel,
Bear it, my ſon, tho' thy brave heart rebel.

Telemachus ſtruggles againſt the yearnings of nature, and ſhews himſelf to be a maſter of his paſſions; he muſt therefore be thought to exert an act of wiſdom, not of inſenſibility.

(Suſpending ſorrow with celeſtial ſtrain
Breath'd from the gods to ſoften human pain)
Time ſteals away with unregarded wing,
And the ſoul hears him, tho' he ceaſe to ſing.
Ulyſſes late he ſaw, on Cretan ground,
(His father's gueſt) for Minos' birth renown'd.
He now but waits the wind, to waft him o'er
With boundleſs treaſure, from Theſprotia's ſhore.
To this the queen. The wand'rer let me hear,
While yon' luxurious race indulge their cheer,
Devour the grazing ox and browzing goat,
And turn my gen'rous vintage down their throat.
For where's an arm, like thine Ulyſſes! ſtrong,
To curb wild riot and to puniſh wrong?
She ſpoke. Telemachus then ſneez'd aloud;
Conſtrain'd, his noſtril echo'd thro' the crowd.

v. 615. ——— *for Minos' birth renown'd.*] Diodorus Siculus thus writes of Minos: "He was the ſon of Jupiter and Europa, "who was fabled to be carried by a bull, (that is, in a ſhip called "the bull, or that had the image of a bull carved upon its prow) "into Crete: here Minos reigned, and built many cities: he "eſtabliſhed many laws among the Cretans; he alſo provided a "navy, by which he ſubdued many of the adjacent iſlands. The "expreſſion in the Greek will bear a twofold ſenſe; and implies "either where Minos was born, or where the deſcendants of "Minos reign; for Idomenæus, who governed Crete in the days of "Ulyſſes, was a deſcendant of Minos, from his ſon Deucalion."

Homer, mentions it as an honour to Crete, to have given birth to ſo great a law-giver as Minos; and it is univerſally true, that every great man is an honour to his country: Athens did not give reputation to learned men, but learned men to Athens.

v. 624. ——— *Telemachus then ſneez'd aloud.*] Euſtathius fully explains the nature of this omen; for ſneezing was reckoned ominous both by the Greeks and Romans. While Penelope uttered theſe words, Telemachus ſneezes; Penelope accepts the omen, and expects the words to be verified. The original of the veneration paid to ſneezing is this: The head is the moſt ſacred part of the body, the ſeat of thought and reaſon: now the ſneeze coming from the head the antients looked upon it as a ſign or omen, and believed it to be ſent by Jupiter; therefore they regarded it with a kind of adoration: the reader will have a full idea of the nature of the omen of ſneezing here mentioned, from a ſingular inſtance in lib. iii

The ſmiling queen the happy omen bleſt:
" So may theſe impious fall, by fate oppreſt!"
Then to Eumæus bring the ſtranger, fly!
And if my queſtions meet a true reply,
Grac'd with a decent robe he ſhall retire,
A gift in ſeaſon which his wants require.
Thus ſpoke Penelope. Eumæus flies
In duteous haſte, and to Ulyſſes cries.
The queen invites thee, venerable gueſt!
A ſecret inſtinct moves her troubled breaſt,

of Xenophon, in his expedition of Cyrus. Xenophon having ended a ſhort ſpeech to his ſoldiers with theſe words, viz. " We have " many reaſons to hope for preſervation;" they were ſcarce uttered, when a certain ſoldier ſneezed: the whole army took the omen, and at once paid adoration to the gods; then Xenophon reſuming his diſcourſe, proceeded, " Since, my fellow-ſoldiers, at the " mention of our preſervation, Jupiter has ſent this omen," &c. So that Xenophon fully explains Homer.

Sneezing was likewiſe reckoned ominous by the Romans. Thus Catullus,

" Hoc ut dixit, amor ſiniſtra ut ante
" Dextram ſternuit approbationem."

Thus alſo Propertius,

" Num tibi naſcenti primis, mea vita, diebus
" Aridus argutum ſternuit omen amor."

We find in all theſe inſtances that ſneezing was conſtantly received as a good omen, or a ſign of approbation from the gods. In theſe ages we pay an idle ſuperſtition to ſneezing, but it is ever looked upon as a bad omen, and we cry " God bleſs you," upon hearing it, as the Greeks in latter times ſaid Ζῆθι or Ζεῦ σῶσον. We are told this cuſtom aroſe from a mortal diſtemper that affected the head, and threw the patient into convulſive ſneezings, that occaſioned his death.

I will only add from Euſtathius, that Homer expreſſes the loudneſs of the ſneezing, to give a reaſon why Penelope heard it, ſhe being in an apartment at ſome diſtance from Telemachus.

The ſneezing likewiſe gives us the reaſon why Penelope immediately commands Eumæus to introduce the beggar into her preſence: the omen gave her hopes to hear of Ulyſſes; ſhe ſaw the beggar was a ſtranger, and a traveller, and therefore expected he might be able to give her ſome information.

Of her long abſent lord from thee to gain
Some light, and ſoothe her ſoul's eternal pain.
If true, if faithful thou; her grateful mind
Of decent robes a preſent has deſign'd:
So finding favour in the royal eye,
Thy other wants her ſubjects ſhall ſupply.
Fair truth alone (the patient man reply'd)
My words ſhall dictate, and my lips ſhall guide.
To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,
In equal woes, alas! involv'd by heav'n.
Much of his fates I know; but check'd by fear
I ſtand: the hand of violence is here:
Here boundleſs wrongs the ſtarry ſkies invade,
And injur'd ſuppliants ſeek in vain for aid.
Let for a ſpace the penſive queen attend,
Nor claim my ſtory till the ſun deſcend;
Then in ſuch robes as ſuppliants may require,
Compos'd and chearful by the genial fire,
When loud uproar and lawleſs riot ceaſe,
Shall her pleas'd ear receive my words in peace.
Swift to the queen returns the gentle ſwain:
And ſay, (ſhe cries) does fear, or ſhame, detain
The cautious ſtranger? With the begging kind
Shame ſuits but ill. Eumæus thus rejoin'd:
He only aſks a more propitious hour,
And ſhuns (who wou'd not?) wicked men in pow'r;
At ev'ning mild (meet ſeaſon to confer)
By turns to queſtion, and by turns to hear.

v. 644. *To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,*
In equal woes, alas! involv'd by heav'n.]

Theſe words bear a double ſenſe; one applicable to the ſpeaker, the other to the reader: the reader, who knows this beggar to be Ulyſſes, is pleaſed with the concealed meaning, and hears with pleaſure the beggar affirming that he is fully inſtructed in the misfortunes of Ulyſſes: but ſpeaking in the character of a beggar, he keeps Eumæus in ignorance, who believes he is reciting the adventures of a friend, while he really gives his own hiſtory.

Whoe'er this gueſt (the prudent queen replies)
His ev'ry ſtep and ev'ry thought is wiſe.
For men, like theſe, on earth he ſhall not find
In all the miſcreant race of human kind.
Thus ſhe. Eumæus all her words attends,
And parting, to the ſuitor pow'rs deſcends:
There ſeeks Telemachus, and, thus apart
In whiſpers breathes the fondneſs of his heart.
The time, my lord, invites me to repair
Hence to the lodge; my charge demands my care.
Theſe ſons of murder thirſt thy life to take;
O guard it, guard it, for thy ſervant's ſake!
Thanks to my friend, he cries; but now the hour
Of night draws on, go ſeek the rural bow'r;
But firſt refreſh: and at the dawn of day
Hither a victim to the gods convey.
Our life to heav'n's immortal pow'rs we truſt,
Safe in their care, for heav'n protects the juſt.
Obſervant of his voice, Eumæus ſat
And fed recumbent on a chair of ſtate.
Then inſtant roſe, and as he mov'd along
'Twas riot all amid the ſuitor-throng,
They feaſt, they dance, and raiſe the mirthful ſong.
Till now declining tow'rd the cloſe of day,
The ſun obliquely ſhot his dewy ray.

v. 676. —— *but now the hour of night draws on*——] The reader may look back to the beginning of the preceding book, for the explication of δείελον ἦμαρ, here mentioned by Homer.

This book does not fully comprehend the ſpace of one day: it begins with the morning, and ends before night, ſo that the time here mentioned by the poet, is the evening of the thirty-ninth day.

THE ODYSSEY.

* BOOK XVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The fight of Ulyſſes and Irus.

The beggar Irus inſults Ulyſſes; the ſuitors promote the quarrel, in which Irus is worſted, and miſerably handled. Penelope deſcends, and receives the preſents of the ſuitors. The dialogue of Ulyſſes with Eurymachus.

WHILE fix'd in thought the penſive hero ſat,
A mendicant approach'd the royal gate;
A ſurly vagrant of the giant kind,
The ſtain of manhood, of a coward mind:
From feaſt to feaſt, inſatiate to devour
He flew attendant on the genial hour.
Him on his mother's knees, when babe he lay,
She nam'd Arnæus on his natal day:

* Homer has been ſeverely blamed for deſcribing Ulyſſes, a king, entering the liſts with a beggar: Rapin affirms, that he demeans himſelf by engaging with an unequal adverſary. The objection would be unanſwerable, if Ulyſſes appeared in his royal character: but it is as neceſſary in epic poetry, as on the theatre, to adapt the behaviour of every perſon to the character he is to repreſent, whether real or imaginary. Would it not have been ridiculous to have repreſented him, while he was diſguiſed in the garb of a beggar, refuſing the combat, becauſe he knew himſelf to be a king? and would not ſuch a conduct have endangered a diſcovery? Ought we not rather to look upon this epiſode as an inſtance of the greatneſs of the calamities of Ulyſſes, who is reduced to ſuch uncommon extremities as to be ſet upon a level with the meaneſt of wretches?

v. 8. *She nam'd Arnæus.*] It ſeems probable from this paſſage, that the mother gave the name to the child in the days of Homer;

But Irus his aſſociates call'd the boy,
Practis'd, the common meſſenger to fly;
Irus, a name expreſſive of th' employ.
From his own roof, with meditated blows,
He ſtrove to drive the man of mighty woes.
Hence dotard, hence! and timely ſpeed thy way,
Leſt drag'd in vengeance thou repent thy ſtay;
See how with nods aſſent yon' princely train!
But honouring age, in mercy I refrain;

though perhaps not without the concurrence of the father: thus in the ſcriptures it is ſaid of Leah, that "ſhe bare a ſon and called "his name Reuben;" and again, "ſhe called his name Simeon;" and the ſame is frequently repeated both of Leah and Rachael. In the age of Ariſtophanes, the giving a name to the child ſeems to have been a divided prerogative between the father and mother: for in his Νέφελαι there is a diſpute between Strepſiades and his wife, concerning the name of their ſon: the wife was of noble birth, and would therefore give him a noble name; the huſband was a plain villager, and was rather for a name that denoted frugality: but the woman not waving the leaſt branch of her prerogative, they compromiſed the affair, by giving the child a compounded name that implied both frugality and chivalry, derived from φείδω to ſpare, and ἵππος an horſe; and the young cavalier's name was Phidippides. Euſtathius affirms, that antiently the mother named the child; and the ſcholiaſt upon Ariſtophanes in avib. quotes a fragment from Euripides to this purpoſe from a play called Ægeus.

Τί σὲ μάτερ ἐν δεκάτᾳ τέκνον ὠνόμαζε.

"What was the name given on the tenth day by the mother to "thee, the child?" Dacier tells us, that the name of Arnæus was prophetic ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρνῶν, "from the ſheep the glutton "would devour when he came to manhood"; but this is mere fancy, and it is no reaſon becauſe he proved a glutton, that therefore the name foretold it: one might rather think the fondneſs of the mother toward her infant, ſuggeſted a very different view: ſhe gave the name according to her wiſhes, and flattered herſelf that he would prove a very rich man, "a man of many flocks and herds:" and therefore ſhe called him Ἀρναῖος: and this is the more probable, becauſe all riches originally conſiſted in flocks and herds.

v. 11. *Irus, a name expreſſive of th' employ.*] To underſtand this we muſt have recourſe to the derivation of the word Irus; it comes from ἴρω, which ſignifies, "nuncio;" Irus was therefore ſo called, becauſe he was a public meſſenger; and Iris bears that name, as the meſſenger of the gods; Ἶρος, ἀπαγγέλων; Ἶρις, Ἄγγελος. Heſychius.

In peace away! leſt, if perſuaſions fail,
This arm with blows more eloquent prevail.
To whom, with ſtern regard: O inſolence,
Indecently to rail without offence!
What bounty gives, without a rival ſhare;
I aſk, what harms not thee, to breathe this air:
Alike on alms we both precarious live;
And canſt thou envy, when the great relieve?
Know from the bounteous heav'ns all riches flow,
And what man gives, the gods by man beſtow;
Proud as thou art, henceforth no more be proud,
Leſt I imprint my vengeance in thy blood;
Old as I am, ſhould once my fury burn,
How would'ſt thou fly, nor ev'n in thought return?
Mere woman-glutton! (thus the churl reply'd)
A tongue ſo flippant, with a throat ſo wide!
Why ceaſe I, gods! to daſh thoſe teeth away,
Like ſome vile boar's, that greedy of his prey
Uproots the bearded corn? riſe, try the fight,
Gird well thy loins, approach and feel my might:

v. 34. ——*To daſh thoſe teeth away,*
Like ſome wild boar's.]

Theſe words refer to a cuſtom that prevailed in former ages; it was allowed to ſtrike out the teeth of any beaſt which the owner found in his grounds: Euſtathius informs us, that this was a cuſtom or law among the people of Cyprus; but from what Homer here ſpeaks, it ſeems to have been a general practice: at leaſt it was in uſe amongſt the Ithacans.

v. 37. *Gird well thy loins.*] We may gather from hence the manner of the ſingle combat; the champions fought naked, and only made uſe of a cincture round the loins out of decency. Homer directly affirms it, when Ulyſſes prepares for the fight.

Then girding his ſtrong loins, the king prepares
To cloſe in combat and his body bares;
Broad ſpread his ſhoulders, and his nervous thighs
By juſt degrees like well turn'd columns riſe;
Ample his cheſt, his arms are round and long,
And each ſtrong joint Minerva knits more ſtrong.

Thus Diomed in the Iliad girds his friend Euryalus when he engages Epæus.

Sure of defeat, before the peers engage;
Unequal fight! when youth contends with age!
Thus in a wordy war their tongues diſplay
More fierce intents, preluding to the fray;
Antinous hears, and in a jovial vein,
Thus with loud laughter to the ſuitor-train.
This happy day in mirth, my friends employ,
And lo! the gods conſpire to crown our joy.
See ready for the fight, and hand to hand,
Yon' ſurly mendicants contentious ſtand;
Why urge we not to blows? Well pleas'd they ſpring
Swift from their ſeats, and thick'ning form a ring.
To whom Antinous. Lo! enrich'd with blood,
A kid's well-fatted entrails (taſteful food)
On glowing embers lie; on him beſtow
The choiceſt portion who ſubdues his foe;
Grant him unrival'd in theſe walls to ſtay,
The ſole attendant on the genial day.
The lords applaud: Ulyſſes then with art,
And fears well-feign'd, diſguis'd his dauntleſs heart:
Worn as I am with age, decay'd with woe;
Say, is it baſeneſs, to decline the foe?
Hard conflict! when calamity and age
With vig'rous youth, unknown to cares, engage!
Yet fearful of diſgrace, to try the day
Imperious hunger bids, and I obey;
But ſwear, impartial arbiters of right,
Swear to ſtand neutral, while we cope in fight.

Officious with the cincture girds him round.

The ſpeeches here are ſhort, and the periods remarkably conciſe, ſuitable to the nature of anger. The reader may conſult the annotations on the xxth book, concerning the goat's entrails mentioned here by Antinous.

v. 64. *But ſwear, impartial arbiters of right,*
Swear to ſtand neutral, while we cope in fight.]

This is a very neceſſary precaution: Ulyſſes had reaſon to appre-

The peers aſſent: when ſtraight his ſacred head
Telemachus uprais'd, and ſternly ſaid.
Stranger, if prompted to chaſtiſe the wrong
Of this bold inſolent; confide, be ſtrong!
Th' injurious Greek that dares attempt a blow,
That inſtant makes Telemachus his foe;
And theſe my friends * ſhall guard the ſacred ties
Of hoſpitality, for they are wiſe.
Then girding his ſtrong loins, the king prepares
To cloſe in combat, and his body bares;
Broad ſpread his ſhoulders, and his nervous thighs
By juſt degrees, like well-turn'd columns, riſe:
Ample his cheſt, his arms are round and long,
And each ſtrong joint Minerva knits more ſtrong,
(Attendant on her chief:) the ſuitor-crowd
With wonder gaze, and gazing ſpeak aloud;
Irus! alas! ſhall Irus be no more,
Black fate impends, and this th' avenging hour!

hend that the ſuitors would intereſt themſelves in the cauſe of Irus, who was their daily attendant, rather than in that of a perfect ſtranger. Homer takes care to point out the prudence of Ulyſſes upon every emergence: beſides, he raiſes this fray between two beggars into ſome dignity, by requiring the ſanction of an oath to regulate the laws of the combat. It is the ſame ſolemnity uſed in the Iliad between Paris and Menelaus, and repreſents theſe combatants engaging with the formality of two heroes.

v. 72. *And theſe my friends ſhall guard the ſacred ties*
Of hoſpitality, for they are wiſe.]

When Telemachus ſpeaks theſe words, he is to be ſuppoſed to turn to Eurymachus and Antinous, to whom he directs his diſcourſe. It muſt be allowed that this is an artful piece of flattery in Telemachus, and he makes uſe of it to engage theſe two princes, who were the chief of the ſuitors, on his ſide.

* Antinous and Eurymachus.

v. 82. *Irus, alas! ſhall Irus be no more.*] This is literally tranſlated: I confeſs I wiſh Homer had omitted theſe little colluſions of words: he ſports with Ιρος ἄιρος. It is a low conceit, alluding to the derivation of Irus, and means that he ſhall never more be a meſſenger. The tranſlation, though it be verbal, yet is free from

Gods! how his nerves a matchleſs ſtrength proclaim:
Swell o'er his well-ſtrung limbs, and brace his frame!
Then pale with fears, and ſick'ning at the ſight,
They dragg'd th' unwilling Irus to the fight;
From his blank viſage fled the coward blood,
And his fleſh trembled as aghaſt he ſtood:
O that ſuch baſeneſs ſhould diſgrace the light!
O hide it, death, in everlaſting night!
(Exclaims Antinous) can a vig'rous foe
Meanly decline to combat age and woe?
But hear me, wretch! if recreant in the fray,
That huge bulk yield this ill-conteſted day;
Inſtant thou ſail'ſt, to Echetus reſign'd;
A tyrant, fierceſt of the tyrant-kind,

ambiguity, and the joke concealed in ἄϊρος; this will be evident if we ſubſtitute another name in the place of Irus; we may ſay Achilles ſhall be no longer Achilles, without deſcending from the gravity of epic poetry.

v. 90. *O that ſuch baſeneſs ſhould diſgrace the light!*
O! hide it, death, &c.]

Euſtathius gives us an inſtance of the deep penetration of ſome critics, in their comments upon theſe words; they have found in them the philoſophy of Pythagoras, and the tranſmigration of ſouls. The verſe ſtands thus in Homer;

Νῦν μὲν μήτ' εἴης βυγάϊε, μήτε γένοιο:

which they imagine is to be underſtood after this manner; "I "wiſh thou hadſt never been born! and mayſt thou never exiſt "again, or have a ſecond being!" To recite ſuch an abſurdity, is to refute it. The verſe when literally rendered bears this import; "I wiſh thou wert now dead, or hadſt never been born!" an imprecation very natural to perſons in anger, who ſeldom give themſelves time to ſpeak with profound alluſions to philoſophy.

v. 96. *Inſtant thou ſail'ſt, to Echetus reſign'd;*
A tyrant, fierceſt of the tyrant-kind.]

The tradition concerning Echetus ſtands thus: he was king of Epirus, the ſon of Euchenor and Phlogea; he had a daughter called Metopè, or, as others affirm, Amphiſſa; ſhe being corrupted by Æchmodicus, Echetus put out her eyes, and condemned her to grind pieces of iron made in the reſemblance of corn; and told her ſhe ſhould recover her ſight when ſhe had ground the iron into flour.

Who caſts thy mangled ears and noſe a prey
To hungry dogs, and lops the man away.
While with indignant ſcorn he ſternly ſpoke,
In ev'ry joint the trembling Irus ſhook;
Now front to front each frowning champion ſtands,
And poiſes high in air his adverſe hands.
The chief yet doubts, or to the ſhades below
To fell the giant at one vengeful blow,
Or ſave his life; and ſoon his life to ſave
The king reſolves, for mercy ſways the brave.
That inſtant Irus his huge arm extends,
Full on the ſhoulder the rude weight deſcends;
The ſage Ulyſſes, fearful to diſcloſe
The hero latent in the man of woes,
Check'd half his might; yet riſing to the ſtroke,
His jaw-bone daſh'd; the craſhing jaw-bone broke:
Down dropp'd he ſtupid from the ſtunning wound;
His feet extended, quiv'ring, beat the ground;
His mouth and noſtrils ſpout a purple flood;
His teeth, all ſhatter'd, ruſh immix'd with blood.
The peers tranſported, as outſtretch'd he lies,
With burſts of laughter rend the vaulted ſkies;
Then dragg'd along, all bleeding from the wound,
His length of carcaſs trailing prints the ground;

He invited Æchmodicus to an entertainment, and cut off the extremities from all parts of his body, and caſt them to the dogs; at length being ſeized with madneſs, he fed upon his own fleſh, and died. This hiſtory is confirmed, lib. iv. of Apollonius,

Τθρισὶς Ἔχετος γλήναις ἔνι χάλκεα κέντρα
Πῆξε θυγατρὸς ἑῆς, σανόεντι δὲ κάρφεται ὅτῳ,
Ὀρφναίῃ ἐνὶ χαλκὸν ἀλετρεύσασα καλιῇ.

I wonder how this laſt quotation eſcaped the diligence of Euſtathius. Dacier affirms, that no mention is made of Echetus by any of the Greek hiſtorians, and therefore ſhe has recourſe to another tradition, preſerved by Euſtathius, who tells us, that Echetus was contemporary with Homer, that the poet had been ill uſed by him, and therefore took this revenge for his inhumanity.

Rais'd on his feet, again he reels, he falls,
'Till propp'd, reclining on the palace walls;
Then to his hand a ſtaff the victor gave,
And thus with juſt reproach addreſs'd the ſlave.
There terrible, affright the dogs, and reign
A dreaded tyrant o'er the beſtial train!
But mercy to the poor and ſtranger ſhow,
Leſt heav'n in vengeance ſend ſome mightier woe.
Scornful he ſpoke, and o'er his ſhoulder flung
The broad patch'd ſcrip; the ſcrip in tatters hung
Ill join'd, and knotted to a twiſted thong.
Then turning ſhort, diſdain'd a further ſtay;
But to the palace meaſur'd back the way.
There as he reſted, gathering in a ring
The peers with ſmiles addreſt their unknown king:
Stranger, may Jove and all th' aerial pow'rs,
With ev'ry bleſſing crown thy happy hours?
Our freedom to thy proweſs'd arm we owe
From bold intruſion of thy coward foe;
Inſtant the flying ſail the ſlave ſhall wing
To Echetus, the monſter of a king.
While pleas'd he hears, Antinous bears the food,
A kid's well fatted entrails, rich with blood:
The bread from caniſters of ſhining mold
Amphinomus; and wines that laugh in gold:
And oh! (he mildly cries) may heav'n diſplay
A beam of glory o'er thy future day!
Alas, the brave too oft' is doom'd to bear
The gripes of poverty, and ſtings of care.

v. 140. *From bold intruſion of thy coward foe.*] The word in the Greek is ἀναλτον. Γαστερα ἄναλτον is "a voracious appetite, "a ſtomach that nothing can ſatisfy;" Heſychius thus explains it: ἄναλτον ἀναυξες, τοῦτ' ἐστιν ἰκανὸν, ἢ ἀπλήρωτον παρὰ τὴν ἄλσιν. But there is undoubtedly an error in Heſychius, inſtead of ἰκανὸν we ſhould read ἰσχνὸν, that is "meager," or a "ſtomach "that appears always unfilled. The general moral that we are to

To whom with thought mature the king replies:
The tongue ſpeaks wiſely, when the ſoul is wiſe;
Such was thy father! in imperial ſtate,
Great without vice, that oft' attends the great:
Nor from the ſire art thou, the ſon, declin'd;
Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind!
Of all that breathes, or grov'ling creeps on earth,
Moſt vain is man! calamitous by birth;
To-day with pow'r elate, in ſtrength he blooms;
The haughty creature on that pow'r preſumes:
Anon from heav'n a ſad reverſe he feels;
Untaught to bear, 'gainſt heav'n the wretch rebels.
For man is changeful, as his bliſs or woe;
Too high when proſp'rous, when diſtreſt too low.

gather from the behaviour of Ulyſſes and Irus, is that inſolence and boaſting are ſigns of cowardice.

v. 156. *Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind!*] There never was a finer lecture of morality read in any of the ſchools of the philoſophers, than this which Ulyſſes delivers to Amphinomus; he uſhers it in with great ſolemnity, and ſpeaks to all mankind in the perſon of Amphinomus. It is quoted by a variety of authors: Pliny in his preface to his Natural Hiſtory, lib. 7. has wrote a diſſertation on this ſentence.

Of all that breathes, or grov'ling creeps on earth,
Moſt vain is man,

Ariſtotle and Maximus Tyrius quote it; and Plutarch twice refers to it. Homer conſiders man both with reſpect to the errors of the mind, and the calamities incident to the body; and upon a review of all mortal creatures, he attributes to man the unhappy ſuperiority in miſeries. But indeed Homer is ſo plain that he needs no interpretation, and any words but his own muſt diſgrace him. Beſides, this ſpeech is beautiful in another view, and excellently ſets forth the forgiving temper of Ulyſſes: he ſaw that all the ſparks of virtue and humanity were not extinguiſhed in Amphinomus; he therefore warns him with great ſolemnity to forſake the ſuitors; he imprints conviction upon his mind, though ineffectually, and ſhews by it that when he falls by the hand of Telemachus, in the ſucceeding parts of the Odyſſey, his death is not a revenge but a puniſhment.

v. 163. *For man is changeful as his bliſs or woe.*] Moſt of the interpreters have greatly miſrepreſented theſe words.

Τοῖος γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων
Οἷον ἐπ' ἦμαρ ἄγησι.

There was a day, when with the ſcornful great
I ſwell'd in pomp and arrogance of ſtate;
Proud of the pow'r that to high birth belongs;
And us'd that pow'r to juſtify my wrongs.
Then let not man be proud: but firm of mind,
Bear the beſt humbly, and the worſt reſign'd;
Be dumb when heav'n afflicts! unlike yon' train
Of haughty ſpoilers, inſolently vain;
Who make their queen and all her wealth a prey:
But vengeance and Ulyſſes wing their way.
O may'ſt thou, favour'd by ſome guardian pow'r,
Far, far be diſtant in that deathful hour!
For ſure I am, if ſtern Ulyſſes breathe,
Theſe lawleſs riots end in blood and death.
Then to the gods the roſy juice he pours,
And the drain'd goblet to the chief reſtores.
Stung to the ſoul, o'ercaſt with holy dread,
He ſhook the graceful honours of his head;
His boding mind the future woe foreſtalls:
In vain! by great Telemachus he falls,
For Pallas ſeals his doom: all ſad he turns
To join the peers; reſumes his throne and mourns.

They thus tranſlate it, "talis mens hominum, qualem deus ſug-
"gerit;" or, "Such is the mind of man, as heav'n inſpires:"
but this is an error, for οἷον cannot refer to νόος, but to ἦμαρ,
and the ſentence is thus to be rendered, "Talis mens hominum,
"qualem diem deus inducit;" that is, "The mind of man
"changes with the complexion of the day, as heav'n ſends happi-
"neſs or miſery;" or as in the tranſlation,

For man is changeful as his bliſs or woe;
Too high when proſp'rous, when diſtreſs'd too low.

The reader will be convinced that the conſtruction requires this
ſenſe, by joining the prepoſition with the verb, ἐπὶ with ἄγῃσι,
and rendering it, οἷον ἦμαρ ἐπάγῃσι; nothing being more fre-
quent than ſuch a diviſion of the prepoſition from the verb amongſt
the Greeks. It muſt be allowed, that Homer gives a very unhap-
py, yet too juſt a picture of human nature: man is too apt to be
proud and inſolent in proſperity, and mean and abject in adverſity;
and thoſe men who are moſt overbearing in an happy ſtate, are al-
ways moſt baſe and mean in the day of affliction.

Meanwhile Minerva with inſtinctive fires
Thy ſoul, Penelope, from heav'n inſpires;
With flatt'ring hopes the ſuitors to betray,
And ſeem to meet, yet fly, the bridal day;
Thy huſband's wonder, and thy ſon's, to raiſe;
And crown the mother and the wife with praiſe.

v. 189. *With flatt'ring hopes the ſuitors to betray.*] The Greek is very conciſe, and the expreſſion uncommon, ὅπως ϖετάτειε θυμὸν μνηϛήϱων; that is, Penelope thus acted that ſhe might "dilate the heart of the ſuitors;" meaning (as Euſtathius obſerves) that ſhe might give them falſe hopes by appearing in their company; for the heart ſhrinks, and is contracted by ſorrow and deſpair, and is again dilated by hope or joy: this is I believe literally true, the ſpirits flow briſkly when we are in joy, and a new pulſe is given to the blood, which neceſſarily muſt dilate the heart: on the contrary, when we are in ſorrow the ſpirits are languid, and the blood moves leſs actively; and therefore the heart ſhrinks and contracts, the blood wanting vigour to dilate and expand it.

v. 191. *Thy huſband's wonder, and thy ſon's to raiſe.*] This is ſolely the act of Minerva, for Penelope is ignorant that ſhe is to appear before her huſband. This interview is excellently managed by Homer: Ulyſſes is to be convinced of his wife's fidelity; to bring this about, he introduces her upon the public ſtage, where her huſband ſtands as a common unconcerned ſpectator, and hears her expreſs her love for him in the warmeſt terms; here is no form for art or deſign, becauſe ſhe is ignorant that ſhe ſpeaks before Ulyſſes; and therefore her words muſt be ſuppoſed to proceed from the heart. This gives us a reaſon why Homer makes her dwell at large upon her paſſion for Ulyſſes, and paint it in the ſtrongeſt colours, viz. to evidence her chaſtity, and urge Ulyſſes to haſten the deſtruction of the ſuitors, by convincing him that ſhe is able no longer to elude the marriage hour. But then it may be objected, if Penelope's ſole deſign was to give a falſe hope to the ſuitors, does ſhe not take a very wrong method, by ſpeaking ſo very tenderly of Ulyſſes? is not this a more probable reaſon for deſpair, than hope? It is true, it would have been ſo, if in the concluſion of her ſpeech ſhe had not artfully added,

But when my ſon grows man, the royal ſway
Reſign, and happy be thy bridal day!

So that Telemachus being now grown up to maturity, the ſuitors concluded that the nuptial hour was at hand. If then we conſider the whole conduct of Penelope in this book, it muſt be allowed to be very refined and artful; ſhe obſerves a due regard towards Ulyſſes, by ſhewing ſhe is not to be perſuaded to marry; and yet by the ſame words ſhe gives the ſuitors hopes that the day is almoſt come when ſhe intends to celebrate her nuptials; ſhe manages ſo dex-

Then, while the ſtreaming ſorrow dims her eyes,
Thus with a tranſient ſmile the matron cries,
Eurynomè! to go where riot reigns
I feel an impulſe, tho' my ſoul diſdains;
To my lov'd ſon the ſnares of death to ſhow,
And in the traitor-friend unmaſk the foe;
Who ſmooth of tongue, in purpoſe inſincere,
Hides fraud in ſmiles, while death is ambuſh'd there.
Go warn thy ſon, nor be the warning vain,
(Reply'd the ſageſt of the royal train)
But bath'd, anointed, and adorn'd deſcend;
Pow'rful of charms, bid ev'ry grace attend;
The tide of flowing tears a-while ſuppreſs;
Tears but indulge the ſorrow, not repreſs.
Some joy remains: to thee a ſon is giv'n,
Such as in fondneſs parents aſk of heav'n.

trouſly, as to perſuade without a promiſe; and for this reaſon the words are put into the mouth of Ulyſſes, and it is Ulyſſes who gives the hopes, rather than Penelope.

v. 193. *Then, while the ſtreaming ſorrow dims her eyes,*
Thus with a tranſient ſmile the matron cries.]

Homer gives us a very beautiful and juſt image in theſe words. In the Iliad he uſed a ſimilar expreſſion concerning Andromache, δακρυόεν γελάσασα; "a ſmile chaſtis'd with tears." Ἀχρεῖον δ' ἐγέλασσεν here bears the ſame import.

v. 207. ——— —— *to thee a ſon is giv'n,*
Such as in fondneſs parents aſk of heav'n.]

I am not certain that this is the exact ſenſe of Homer; Dacier underſtands him very differently. Eurynomè (obſerves that author) is not endeavouring to comfort Penelope becauſe her ſon is now come to years of maturity; her purpoſe is, to ſhew the neceſſity ſhe has to have recourſe to art, to aſſiſt her beauty: for (adds ſhe) your ſon is grown a man; meaning that a lady who has a ſon twenty years old, muſt have loſt her natural beauty, and has occaſion to be obliged to art to give her an artificial one. This, I confeſs, is too true, but it ſeems a little too ludicrous for epic poetry; I have followed a different ſenſe, that gives us a far nobler image; conformable to that verſe of Horace.

"Quid voveat dulcî nutricula majus alumno,
"Quam ſapere," &c.

This agrees with the tenour of Euryclea's ſpeech, and is a foundation of great comfort to Penelope.

Ah me! forbear, returns the queen, forbear,
Oh! talk not, talk not of vain beauty's care;
No more I bathe, ſince he no longer ſees
Thoſe charms, for whom alone I wiſh to pleaſe.
The day that bore Ulyſſes from this coaſt,
Blaſted the little bloom theſe cheeks could boaſt.
But inſtant bid Autonoè deſcend,
Inſtant Hippodamè our ſteps attend;
Ill ſuits it female virtue, to be ſeen
Alone, indecent, in the walks of men.
Then while Eurynomè the mandate bears,
From heav'n Minerva ſhoots with guardian cares;
O'er all her ſenſes, as the couch ſhe preſt,
She pours a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt,
With ev'ry beauty ev'ry feature arms,
Bids her cheeks glow, and lights up all her charms,
In her love-darting eyes awakes the fires,
(Immortal gifts! to kindle ſoft deſires)
From limb to limb an air majeſtic ſheds,
And the pure iv'ry o'er her boſom ſpreads.
Such Venus ſhines, when with a meaſur'd bound
She ſmoothly gliding ſwims th' harmonious round,
When with the graces in the dance ſhe moves,
And fires the gazing gods with ardent loves.
Then to the ſkies her flight Minerva bends,
And to the queen the damſel-train deſcends:

v. 221. *O'er all her ſenſes, as the couch ſhe preſt,*
She pours a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt.]
This is an admirable ſtroke of art, to ſhew the determined reſolution of Penelope, to forbear the endeavour of making her perſon agreeable in any eyes but thoſe of Ulyſſes: a goddeſs is obliged to caſt her into an involuntary repoſe, and to ſupply an adventitious grace while ſhe ſleeps.

v. 233. *Then to the ſkies her flight Minerva bends.*] We ſee Penelope is a woman of ſo much wiſdom, as to be the favourite of Minerva. She acts in every point with the higheſt diſcretion, and is inconſolable for her huſband; yet the poet forbears to let her into the ſecret that Ulyſſes is returned: this is undoubtedly an in-

Wak'd at their ſteps, her flowing eyes uncloſe;
The tear ſhe wipes, and thus renews her woes.
Howe'er 'tis well; that ſleep a-while can free
With ſoft forgetfulneſs, a wretch like me;
Oh! were it giv'n to yield this tranſient breath,
Send, oh! Diana, ſend the ſleep of death!
Why muſt I waſte a tedious life in tears,
Nor bury in the ſilent grave my cares?
O my Ulyſſes! ever honour'd name!
For thee I mourn, 'till death diſſolves my frame.
Thus wailing, ſlow and ſadly ſhe deſcends,
On either hand a damſel-train attends:
Full where the dome its ſhining valves expands,
Radiant before the gazing peers ſhe ſtands;
A veil tranſlucent o'er her brow diſplay'd,
Her beauty ſeems, and only ſeems, to ſhade:
Sudden ſhe lightens in their dazled eyes,
And ſudden flames in ev'ry boſom riſe;
They ſend their eager ſouls with ev'ry look,
'Till ſilence thus th' imperial matron broke:
O why! my ſon, why now no more appears
That warmth of ſoul that urg'd thy younger years?
Thy riper days no growing worth impart,
A man in ſtature, ſtill a boy in heart!
Thy well-knit frame unprofitably ſtrong,
Speaks thee an hero from an hero ſprung:
But the juſt gods in vain thoſe gifts beſtow,
O wiſe alone in form, and brave in ſhow!
Heav'ns! could a ſtranger feel oppreſſion's hand
Beneath thy roof, and could'ſt thou tamely ſtand?

tended ſatyr, and Homer means, that a woman in every point diſcreet, is ſtill to be ſuſpected of loquacity: this ſeems to have been the real ſentiment of Homer, which he more fully declares in the eleventh Odyſſey.

When earneſt to explore thy ſecret breaſt,
Unfold ſome trifle, but conceal the reſt;
For ſince of woman-kind ſo few are juſt,
Think all are falſe, nor ev'n the faithful truſt.

If thou the ſtranger's righteous cauſe decline,
His is the ſuff'rance, but the ſhame is thine.
To whom with filial awe, the prince returns:
That gen'rous ſoul with juſt reſentment burns,
Yet taught by time, my heart has learn'd to glow,
For others good, and melt at others woe:
But impotent theſe riots to repel,
I bear their outrage, tho' my ſoul rebel:
Helpleſs amid the ſnares of death I tread,
And numbers leagu'd in impious union dread:
But now no crime is theirs: this wrong proceeds
From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.
O would to Jove! or her whoſe arms diſplay
The ſhield of Jove, or him who rules the day!
That yon' proud ſuitors, who licentious tread
Theſe courts, within theſe courts like Irus bled:
Whoſe looſe head tott'ring, as with wine oppreſt,
Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breaſt;
Pow'rleſs to move, his ſtagg'ring feet deny
The coward wretch the privilege to fly.
Then to the queen Eurymachus replies;
O juſtly lov'd, and not more fair than wiſe!
Should Greece thro' all her hundred ſtates ſurvey
Thy finiſh'd charms, all Greece would own thy ſway,

v. 275. ——— *this wrong proceeds*
From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.]

Euſtathius informs us, that we are here to underſtand the fray between Irus and Ulyſſes. Penelope refers to the violence intended to be offered to Ulyſſes, when the footſtool was thrown at him by Antinous; we find that ſhe was acquainted with that aſſault from her ſpeech in the preceding book. In reality, the queen was ignorant of the combat between Irus and Ulyſſes; but Telemachus miſunderſtands her with deſign, and makes an apology for the ſuitors, fearing to raiſe a further diſorder, or provoke them to ſome more violent act of reſentment.

v. 288. ———*all Greece would own thy ſway*, &c.] Homer expreſſes Greece by Ἄστυ Ἄργος, Iſian Argos. The word properly (as Euſtathius obſerves) denotes the Morea or Peloponneſus, ſo

In rival crouds conteſt the glorious prize,
Diſpeopling realms to gaze upon thy eyes:
O woman! loveliеſt of the lovely kind,
In body perfect, and compleat in mind!
Ah me! returns the queen, when from this ſhore
Ulyſſes ſail'd, then beauty was no more!
The gods decreed theſe eyes no more ſhould keep
Their wonted grace but only ſerve to weep.
Should he return, whate'er my beauties prove,
My virtues laſt; my brighteſt charm is love.
Now, grief, thou all art mine! the gods o'ercaſt
My ſoul with woes, that long, ah long muſt laſt!
Too faithfully my heart retains the day
That ſadly tore my royal lord away:
He graſp'd my hand, and oh my ſpouſe! I leave
Thy arms, (he cry'd) perhaps to find a grave:
Fame ſpeaks the Trojans bold; they boaſt the ſkill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,
To dart the ſpear, and guide the ruſhing car
With dreadful inroad thro' the walks of war.
My ſentence is gone forth, and 'tis decreed
Perhaps by righteous heav'n that I muſt bleed!

called from Iäſus the ſon of Argus, and Io king of that country; Strabo agrees with Euſtathius. Chapman wonderfully miſtakes Homer, and explains his own miſtake in a paraphraſe of ſix lines.

> Moſt wiſe Icarius' daughter, if all thoſe
> That did for Colchos vent'rous ſail diſpoſe,
> For that rich purchaſe; had before but ſeen
> Earth's richer prize, in th' Ithacenſian queen,
> They had not made that voyage; but to you
> Would all their virtues, all their beings vow.

I need not ſay how foreign this is to the original. In reality Argos with different epithets, ſignifies different countries; Ἀχαϊκὸν Ἄργος means Theſſaly, and Δαναὸν Ἄργος Peloponneſus; but here it denotes Greece univerſally; for it would appear abſurd to tell Penelope, that all the Morea would admire her beauty, this would leſſen the compliment; nor is any reaſon to be aſſigned why Peloponneſus ſhould admire her more than the reſt of the Greeks.

My father, mother, all, I truſt to thee;
To them, to them transfer the love of me:
But when my ſon grows man, the royal ſway
Reſign, and happy be thy bridal day!
Such were his words; and Hymen now prepares
To light his torch, and give me up to cares;
Th' afflictive hand of wrathful Jove to bear:
A wretch the moſt compleat that breathes the air!
Fall'n ev'n below the rights to woman due!
Careleſs to pleaſe, with inſolence ye woo!
The gen'rous lovers, ſtudious to ſucceed,
Bid their whole herds and flocks in banquets bleed;

v. 313. *But when my ſon grows man, the royal ſway*
Reſign, and happy be thy bridal day.]

The original ſays, "reſign the place to Telemachus:" this is ſpoken according to the cuſtoms of antiquity: the wife, upon her ſecond marriage, being obliged to reſign the houſe to the heir of the family. This circumſtance is inſerted with great judgment: the ſuitors were determined to ſeize it upon marriage with Penelope, as appears from the ſecond Odyſſey.

What mighty labours would he then create,
To ſeize his treaſures, and divide his ſtate,
The royal palace to the queen convey,
Or him ſhe bleſſes in the bridal day?

Penelope therefore by this declaration gives the ſuitors to underſtand, that the palace belonged not to her, but Telemachus. This aſſertion has a double effect; it is intended to make the ſuitors leſs warm in their addreſſes; or if they perſiſt, to ſet the injuſtice done to Telemachus in open view. The beauty of all the ſpeeches of Penelope in this book is ſo obvious that it needs no explanation; Homer gives her a very amiable character, ſhe is good in every relation of life, merciful to the poor and ſtranger, a tender mother, and an affectionate wife; every period is almoſt a lecture of morality.

My father, mother, all, I truſt to thee;
To them, to them transfer the love of me.

This ſhews the duty of the child to the parent; it may be extended to all perſons to whom we owe any duty; and humanity requires that we ſhould endeavour to eaſe the burthen of our friends in proportion to their calamities; we ſhould at all times conſult their happineſs, but chiefly in the hour of adverſity. A friend ſhould be a ſupport to lean upon in all our infirmities.

By precious gifts the vow ſincere diſplay:
You, only you, make her ye love your prey.
Well-pleas'd Ulyſſes hears his queen deceive
The ſuitor-train, and raiſe a thirſt to give:

v. 323. *By precious gifts the vow ſincere diſplays:*
You, only you, make her ye love your prey.]

Horace, lib. ii. Sat. 5. makes a very ſevere reflexion upon Penelope, and in her perſon (I ſay not how juſtly) upon the whole ſex; he gives the avarice of the ſuitors as the ſole reaſon of Penelope's charity; and inſinuates that women would ſell their virtue, if men would be at the expence to buy.

"Venit enim magnum donandi parca juventus,
"Nec tantum Veneris, quantum ſtudioſa culinæ.
"Sic tibi Penelope frugi eſt: quæ ſi ſemel uno
"De ſene guſtârit, tecum partita lucellum;
"Ut canis, a corio nunquam abſterrebitur uncto."

Horace had this paſſage in view, and imputes the coldneſs of Penelope to a want of generoſity in her admirers. Diodorus aſſures us, that Venus had a temple in Ægypt dedicated to her under the title of χρυσῆ Ἀφροδίτη: or "golden Venus;" and it is her uſual epithet throughout all Homer. Near Memphis there was an allotment of ground called "the field of golden Venus:" but it ought not to be concealed, that ſome perſons believe ſhe bears that name from the golden colour of her hair. Horace, to give his ſatyr the greater ſtrength, puts the words into the mouth of the prophet Tireſias, a perſon of unerring veracity.

v. 325. *Well pleas'd Ulyſſes hears his queen deceive*
The ſuitor-train, and raiſe a thirſt to give.]

This conduct may appear ſomewhat extraordinary both in Penelope and Ulyſſes; ſhe not only takes, but aſks preſents from perſons whom ſhe never intends to marry: is not this a ſign either of avarice or faſhood? and is not Ulyſſes equally guilty who rejoices at it? But in reality, Penelope is no way faulty; ſhe deceives the ſuitors with hopes of marriage by accepting theſe preſents, but it is for this ſole reaſon that ſhe accepts them; ſhe intends to give them falſe hopes, and by that method to defer the nuptial hour: it is not injuſtice, but an equitable repriſal; they had violently waſted her treaſures, and ſhe artfully recovers part of them by a piece of refined management. Dacier defends her after another method: ſhe believes that Penelope thus acts, not out of intereſt but honour; it was a diſgrace to ſo great a princeſs to have ſo many admirers, and never to receive from their hands ſuch preſents as cuſtom not only allows, but commands; neither is Ulyſſes blameable, who rejoices at his wife's policy. He underſtood her intent, and being artful himſelf, ſmiles to ſee her artfulneſs.

False hopes she kindles, but those hopes betray,
And promise, yet elude the bridal day.
While yet she speaks, the gay Antinous cries,
Offspring of kings, and more than woman wise!
'Tis right; 'tis man's prerogative to give,
And custom bids thee without shame receive;
Yet never, never, from thy dome we move,
'Till Hymen lights the torch of spousal love.
The peers dispatch their heralds to convey
The gifts of love; with speed they take the way.
A robe Antinous gives of shining dyes,
The varying hues in gay confusion rise
Rich from the artist's hand! twelve clasps of gold
Close to the less'ning waist the vest infold;
Down from the swelling loins, the vest unbound
Floats in bright waves redundant o'er the ground.

Plutarch in his Treatise of reading poems, vindicates Ulysses very much in the same way: if (says that author) Ulysses rejoiced at Penelope's art in drawing presents from the suitors out of avarice, he discovers himself to be a sordid prostitutor of his wife; but if through a wiseforesight he hoped by her acceptance of the presents, to get the suitors more into his power, by lulling them into security, and laying all their suspicions asleep, through a sudden prospect of marriage; if this occasioned his joy, this joy arising from her artful management, and from a full confidence in his wife, is no ways blameable, but proceeds from a sufficient and laudable cause. In short, the suitors were enemies, and nothing could be practised dishonourably against them, that either Ulysses or Penelope could act consistently with their own honour.

v. 327. *False hopes she kindles.*] It is certain that the words in the Greek will bear a double construction, and θέλγε θυμὸν μειλιχίοι ἐπέεσσι may refer either to Penelope or Ulysses. Eustathius thinks they are spoken of Ulysses; then the meaning is, that Ulysses comforted himself with her amusing words, while he formed a design very different from what her words expressed; but Dacier refers them to Penelope, perhaps with better reason: θέλγε depends upon ἔειπε in the preceding line; and by thus understanding it, the construction becomes easy and natural: and the sentence means, that Penelope's words flattered the suitors into hopes of marriage, while her thoughts were very distant from complying with their inclinations: this interpretation best agrees with the general design of Penelope, which was to act an artful part, and neither comply, nor absolutely refuse their addresses.

A bracelet rich with gold, with amber gay,
That ſhot effulgence like the ſolar ray,
Eurymachus preſents: and ear-rings bright,
With triple ſtars, that caſt a trembling light.
Piſander bears a necklace wrought with art;
And ev'ry peer, expreſſive of his heart,
A giſt beſtows: this done, the queen aſcends,
And ſlow behind her damſel-train attends.

Then to the dance they form the vocal ſtrain,
'Till Heſperus leads forth the ſtarry train;
And now he raiſes, as the day-light fades,
His golden circlet in the deep'ning ſhades:
Three vaſes heap'd with copious fires diſplay
O'er all the palace a fictitious day;
From ſpace to ſpace the torch wide-beaming burns,
And ſprightly damſels trim the rays by turns.

To whom the king: Ill ſuits your ſex to ſtay
Alone with men! ye modeſt maids, away!

v. 355. *Three vaſes heap'd with copious fires diſplay*
O'er all the palace a fictitious day.]

The word in the Greek is λαμπτὴρ, or a vaſe which was placed upon a tripod, upon which the antients burnt dry and oftentimes odoriferous wood, to give at once both perfume and light. Euſtathius explains it by χυτρόπους, or a veſſel raiſed on feet in the nature of an hearth. Heſychius explains λαμπτὴρ an hearth placed in the middle of the houſe or hall, on which they burnt dry wood with intermingled torches to enlighten it. It is ſtrange that there is no mention of lamps, but only torches, in Homer; undoubtedly lamps were not yet in uſe in Greece, although much earlier found out by the Hebrews: thus Exod. xxv. 6. oil is mentioned, and injoined to be uſed in giving light to the ſanctuary.

v. 359. ——— *Ill ſuits your ſex to ſtay*
Alone with men! ye modeſt maids away.]

Homer is perpetually giving us leſſons of decency and morality. It may be thought that this interlude between Ulyſſes and the damſels of Penelope is foreign to the action of the Odyſſey; but in reality it is far from it: the poet undertook to deſcribe the diſorders which the abſence of a prince occaſions in his family; this paſſage is an inſtance of it; and Homer with good judgment makes theſe wantons declare their contempt of Ulyſſes, and their favour to their ſuitors, that we may acknowledge the juſtice of their puniſhment in the ſubſequent parts of the Odyſſey.

Go, with the queen the ſpindle guide; or cull
(The partners of her cares) the ſilver wool;
Be it my taſk the torches to ſupply,
Ev'n 'till the morning lamp adorns the ſky;
Ev'n 'till the morning, with unwearied care,
Sleepleſs I watch; for I have learn'd to bear.
Scornful they heard: Melantho, fair and young,
(Melantho, from the loins of Dolius ſprung,
Who with the queen her years an infant led,
With the ſoft fondneſs of a daughter bred)
Chiefly derides: regardleſs of the cares
Her queen endures, polluted joys ſhe ſhares
Nocturnal with Eurymachus! With eyes
That ſpeak diſdain, the wanton thus replies.
Oh! whither wanders thy diſtemper'd brain,
Thou bold intruder on a princely train?
Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair;
Or ſhun in ſome black forge the midnight air.

v. 377. *Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair;*
Or ſhun in ſome black forge the midnight air.]

I flatter myſelf that I have given the true ſenſe of χαλκήιος δόμος and λέσχη: in Greece the beggars in winter retired by night to public forges for their warmth, or to ſome rendezvous where they entertained themſelves as it were in a common aſſembly. Euſtathius explains λέσχη to be "a public place without any doors, "where beggars were uſed to lodge." Heſychius gives us ſeveral interpretations of the word, that it ſignifies an aſſembly, a converſation; it implies alſo public ſtoves or baths; and Euſtathius informs us from Ariſtophanes, that beggars uſed to take up their lodgings in the public baths, as well as in theſe places mentioned by Homer; χαλκήιος δόμος is an office of men that work in braſs. He further obſerves that theſe two places are uſed after the ſame manner in Heſiod.

Παὶς δ' ἴθι χαλκεῖον δῶκον, καὶ ἐπ' ἀλέα λέσχην
Ὥρη χειμερίη ὅτε κρύος ἀνέρας εἴργει
Ἰσχανέει.——

It may not be improper to obſerve, that παὶς δ' ἴθι δῶκον χαλκεῖον is very ill tranſlated by "Accede Æneam ſedem," in the Latin verſion; it ſhould be "fuge officinam ærariam."

Proceeds this boldneſs from a turn of ſoul,
Or flows licentious from the copious bowl?
Is it that vanquiſh'd Irus ſwells thy mind?
A foe may meet thee of a braver kind,
Who, ſhort'ning with a ſtorm of blows thy ſtay,
Shall ſend thee howling all in blood away!
To whom with frowns: O impudent in wrong!
Thy lord ſhall curb that inſolence of tongue;
Know to Telemachus I tell th' offence:
The ſcourge, the ſcourge ſhall laſh thee into ſenſe.
With conſcious ſhame they hear the ſtern rebuke,
Nor longer durſt ſuſtain the ſov'reign look.
Then to the ſervile taſk the monarch turns
His royal hands: each torch refulgent burns
With added day: meanwhile in muſeful mood,
Abſorpt in thought, on vengeance fix'd he ſtood.
And now the martial maid, by deeper wrongs
To rouſe Ulyſſes, points the ſuitors tongues,

v. 381. *Is it that vanquiſh'd Irus ſwells thy mind?*] The word in Homer is ἀλύης which is uſed in various places; ſometimes (obſerves Plutarch in his Treatiſe upon reading poems) it ſignifies "being diſquieted in mind,"

Ὡς ἔφατ' ἦ ἀλύεσ' ἀπεβήσατο, τείρετο δ' αἰνῶς.

In other places it implies "an inſolent joy, or boaſting;" and then he quotes this verſe,

Ἦ ἀλύης ὅτι Ἶρον ἐνικήσας.

v. 395. *And now the martial maid, by deeper wrongs,*
To rouſe Ulyſſes, points the ſuitors tongues.]

It may be thought very unjuſtifiable in Homer, to introduce Minerva exciting the ſuitors to violence. Dacier defends the poet, by ſhewing that the ſentiment is conformable to true theology: and the all-wiſe Author of our being is pleaſed ſometimes to harden the hearts of the wicked, (or rather to permit them to harden their own hearts) that they may fill up the meaſure of their crimes, and be ripe for judgment: yet we are not to imagine, that any perſon is neceſſitated to be wicked: it is not the hardening the heart that originally makes men impious, but they are firſt impious, and then they are delivered over to an hardneſs of heart.

Scornful of age, to taunt the virtuous man:
Thoughtleſs and gay, Eurymachus began.
Hear me (he cries) confederates and friends!
Some god, no doubt, this ſtranger kindly ſends;
The ſhining baldneſs of his head ſurvey,
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.—
Then to the king that levell'd haughty Troy.—
Say, if large hire can tempt thee to employ

But Homer may be juſtified another way; and Minerva may be underſtood to act thus in favour of Ulyſſes; the goddeſs of wiſdom infatuates the ſuitors to inſult that hero, and haſten their own deſtruction.

v. 400. *Some god, no doubt, this ſtranger kindly ſends.*] Ariſtotle affirms that Homer is the father of poetry; not only of the epic, but alſo of the dramatic; that he taught how to write tragedy in the Iliad, and comedy by ſeveral ſhort ſketches in the Odyſſey. Euſtathius here remarks, that he likewiſe gave a model for ſatyr, of which the Cyclops of Euripides ſtill extant is an example; (which is a ſatyric poem founded upon the ſtory of Polypheme in Homer.) I confeſs my eye is not ſharp enough to ſee the dignity of theſe railleries; and it may be thought that Homer is the father of another kind of poetry, I mean the farce, and that theſe low conceits are no way to be juſtified, but by being put into the mouths of the ſuitors, perſons of no dignity or character. Longinus brings ſuch deſcriptions of the ſuitors, as inſtances of the decay of Homer's genius. When that declines (obſerves that author) poets commonly pleaſe themſelves with painting manners; ſuch is Homer's deſcription of the lives led by the ſuitors in the palace of Ulyſſes: for in reality all that deſcription is a kind of comedy, wherein the different characters of men are painted.

v. 401. *The ſhining baldneſs of his head ſurvey,*
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.]

This in Dacier's judgment is a raillery purely ſatirical: it is drawn from the ſhining glaſs of an old man's bald head. But if this be purely ſatyrical, to be a ſatyriſt is to be a bad man: to railly natural infirmities is inhumanity: old age is venerable, and the bald head as well as the gray hair is an honour, and ought not to be the ſubject of raillery. I doubt not but Homer put it into the mouth of Eurymachus to make him more odious, and to ſhew us that the ſame man who invades his prince's property, inſults the ſtranger, and outrages the poor; pays no deference to old age, but is baſe enough to contemn what he ought to honour. Vice and folly are the province of ſatyr, not human infirmity.

Thoſe hands in works; to tend the rural trade,
To dreſs the walk, and form th' embow'ring ſhade?
So food and raiment conſtant will I give:
But idly thus thy ſoul prefers to live,
And ſtarve by ſtrolling, not by work to thrive.

To whom incens'd: Should we, O prince, engage
In rival taſks beneath the burning rage
Of ſummer ſuns; were both conſtrain'd to wield,
Foodleſs, the ſcythe along the burthen'd field;

v. 412. ——— *were both conſtrain'd to wield,*
Foodleſs, the ſcythe along the burthen'd field.]

I doubt not but ſuch employments as theſe, now only ſuitable to low life, will ſeem mean to many readers, and unworthy of the dignity of epic poetry: it is no defence to ſay that they are mentioned by a beggar, and therefore agreeable to his character: the words are addreſſed to a prince, and ſuppoſe that a ſkill in ſuch works was not unuſual to perſons of eminent ſtations; otherwiſe the challenge of Ulyſſes is ridiculouſly abſurd. Who could forbear laughing, if he ſhould hear one of our beggars challenge a peer, to plough or mow with him all day without eating? The truth is, the greateſt perſons followed ſuch employments without any diminution of their dignities; nay, a ſkill in ſuch works as agriculture was a glory even to a king: Homer here places it upon a level with military ſcience, and the knowledge of the cultivation of the ground is equal to glory in war. In the preface to the Paſtorals of Virgil, (but not written by Mr. Dryden) there is a paſſage that ſhews that the ſame ſimplicity of manners prevailed amongſt the ancient Latins, as amongſt the antient Greeks: "It "ought not (ſays that author) to ſurpriſe a modern writer, that "kings laid down their firſt rudiments of government in tending "their mute ſubjects, their herds and flocks: nor ought it to "ſeem ſtrange that the maſter of the horſe to king Latinus in "the ninth Æneid was found in the homely employment of cleaving blocks, when news of the firſt ſkirmiſh between the Trojans "and Latins was brought to him." This paſſage fully vindicates Homer, and ſhews that ſuch employments were no diſhonour to the greateſt perſons; but there are two errours in the quotation; it is not taken from the ninth, but the ſeventh Æneid; nor is Tyrrheus, who cleaves the blocks, maſter of the horſe to king Latinus, but the intendant of his flocks; or as Dryden tranſlates it,

Tyrrheus chief ranger to the Latian king.

"———Tyrrheuſque pater, cui regia parent
"Armenta, & latè cuſtodia credita campi."

Or ſhould we labour, while the ploughſhare wounds,
With ſteers of equal ſtrength, th' allotted grounds:
Beneath my labours, how thy wond'ring eyes
Might ſee the ſable field at once ariſe!
Should Jove dire war unlooſe; with ſpear, and ſhield,
And nodding helm, I tread th' enſanguin'd field,
Fierce in the van: then wou'dſt thou, wou'dſt thou,—
ſay,—
Miſ-name me, glutton, in that glorious day?
No, thy ill-judging thoughts the brave diſgrace;
'Tis thou injurious art, not I am baſe.
Proud to ſeem brave among a coward-train!
But know, thou art not valorous, but vain.
Gods! ſhould the ſtern Ulyſſes riſe in might,
Theſe gates would ſeem too narrow for thy flight.
While yet he ſpeaks, Eurymachus replies,
With indignation flaſhing from his eyes.
Slave, I with juſtice might deſerve the wrong,
Should I not puniſh that opprobrious tongue,
Irrev'rent to the great, and uncontrol'd,
Art thou from wine, or innate folly, bold?
Perhaps, theſe outrages from Irus flow,
A worthleſs triumph o'er a worthleſs foe!
He ſaid, and with full force a footſtool threw:
Whirl'd from his arm with erring rage it flew;

Tyrrheus is no otherwiſe a warriour than as a deer under his charge being killed, engages him in a quarrel, and he arms the ruſtics to encounter the Trojans who ſlew it.

" ——— vocat agmina Tyrrheus
" Quadrifidam quercum cuneis ut forte coactis
" Scindebat"———

Tyrrheus, the foſter-father of the beaſt,
Then clench'd an hatchet in his horny fiſt;
But held his hand from the deſcending ſtroke,
And left his wedge within the cloven oak.

It is true, though Tyrrheus was not maſter of the horſe to the king, yet his office was a poſt of dignity, otherwiſe it had been very eaſy for Virgil to have given him a more noble employment.

Ulyſſes, cautious of the vengeful foe,
Stoops to the ground, and diſappoints the blow.
Not ſo a youth who deals the goblet round,
Full on his ſhoulder it inflicts a wound,
Daſh'd from his hand the ſounding goblet flies,
He ſhrieks, he reels, he falls, and breathleſs lies.
Then wild uproar and clamour mounts the ſky,
'Till mutual thus the peers indignant cry;
O had this ſtranger ſunk to realms beneath,
To the black realms of darkneſs and of death,
Ere yet he trod theſe ſhores! to ſtrife he draws
Peer againſt peer; and what the weighty cauſe?
A vagabond! for him the great deſtroy
In vile ignoble jars, the feaſt of joy.
To whom the ſtern Telemachus uproſe!
Gods! what wild folly from the goblet flows?
Whence this unguarded openneſs of ſoul,
But from the licence of the copious bowl?
Or heav'n deluſion ſends: but hence, away!
Force I forbear, and without force obey.
Silent, abaſh'd, they hear the ſtern rebuke,
'Till thus Amphinomus the ſilence broke.
True are his words, and he whom truth offends
Not with Telemachus, but truth contends;
Let not the hand of violence invade
The rev'rend ſtranger, or the ſpotleſs maid;

v. 457. *Force I forbear, and without force obey.*] This is very artful in Telemachus; he had ſpoken warmly in defence of Ulyſſes, and he apprehends leſt he ſhould have provoked the ſuitors too far; he therefore ſoftens his expreſſion, to avoid ſuſpicions of a latent cauſe, why he intereſts himſelf ſo vigorouſly in vindication of a beggar, againſt the princes of the country. Beſides, too obſtinate an oppoſition might have provoked the ſuitors to have continued all night in the palace, which would have hindered Ulyſſes and Telemachus from concerting their meaſures to bring about their deſtruction: Telemachus therefore, to induce them to withdraw, uſes menaces, but menaces approaching to perſuaſion; if he had uſed violence, matters muſt immediately have come to extremities.

Retire we hence! but crown with roſy wine
The flowing goblet to the pow'rs divine;
Guard he his gueſt beneath whoſe roof he ſtands;
This juſtice, this the ſocial right demands.
The peers aſſent; the goblet Mulius crown'd
With purple juice, and bore in order round;
Each peer ſucceſſive his libation pours
To the bleſt gods that fill th' aerial bow'rs;
Then ſwill'd with wine, with noiſe the crouds obey,
And ruſhing forth tumultuous, reel away.

v. 470. *Each peer ſucceſſive his libation pours*
To the bleſt gods————]

We have already obſerved that libations were made to the gods before and after meals; here we ſee the ſuitors offer their libation before they retire to repoſe. We are not to aſcribe this religious act to the piety of theſe debauchees, but to the cuſtoms of the times; they practiſe not true religion, but only the exteriors of it; they are not pious, but faſhionable.

The action of this book is comprehended in a very ſhort duration of time: it begins towards the cloſe of the day, and ends at the time when the ſuitors withdraw to repoſe; this is the evening and part of the thirty-ninth day.

In general, this book is in the Greek very beautiful: the combat between Irus and Ulyſſes is naturally deſcribed; it is indeed between beggars, but yet not without dignity, it being almoſt of the ſame nature with the ſingle combats practiſed amongſt heroes in their moſt ſolemn games; as is evident from that in the Iliad, at the funeral of Patroclus. I could wiſh Homer had not condeſcended to thoſe low jeſts and mean railleries towards the concluſion: it is true, they are not without effect, as they agree with the characters of the ſuitors and make Ulyſſes a ſpectator of the diſorders of his own family, and provoke him to a ſpeedy vengeance; but might not more ſerious provocations have been found out, ſuch as might become the gravity and majeſty of epic poetry? Or if gaiety was eſſential to his characters, are quibbles ſo too? Theſe may be thought to be of the ſame level with thoſe conceits which Milton puts into the mouth of the devil, and which diſgrace his poem. But the dignity, the tenderneſs, and juſtneſs of the ſentiments, in all the ſpeeches of Penelope, more than atone for the low railleries of Eurymachus.

THE ODYSSEY.

* BOOK XIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Euryclea.

Ulyſſes and his ſon remove the weapons out of the armoury. Ulyſſes in converſation with Penelope gives a fictitious account of his adventures; then aſſures her he had formerly entertained her huſband in Crete; and deſcribes exactly his perſon and dreſs, affirms to have heard of him in Phæacia and Theſprotia, and that his return is certain, and within a month. He then goes to bathe, and is attended by Euryclea, who diſcovers him to be Ulyſſes by the ſcar upon his leg, which he formerly received in hunting the wild boar on Parnaſſus. The poet inſerts a digreſſion, relating that accident, with all its particulars.

CONSULTING ſecret with the blue-ey'd maid
Still in the dome divine Ulyſſes ſtaid:
Revenge mature for act inflam'd his breaſt;
And thus the ſon, the fervent ſire addreſt.

* The ſcene ſtill continues in the palace of Ulyſſes; but new perſons are introduced to carry on the action, and diverſify the ſtory: this book opens with a repetition from the ſixteenth; the antients marked it with an aſteriſm, without any obeliſk, to ſhew that it was here inſerted with propriety: as we draw nearer the concluſion of the poem, the repetitions are more frequent. Virgil has generally avoided them, and indeed it may be obſerved, that theſe two poets differ in nothing more than the manner of their elocution: Virgil is full, but Homer even overflows; and this agrees with their general characters. Homer is like thoſe painters of whom Apelles uſed to complain, that they left nothing to be

Inſtant convey thoſe ſteely ſtores of war
To diſtant rooms, diſpos'd with ſecret care:
The cauſe demanded by the ſuitor-train,
To ſooth their fears a ſpecious reaſon feign:
Say, ſince Ulyſſes left his natal coaſt,
Obſcene with ſmoke, their beamy luſtre loſt,
His arms deform'd, the roof they won't adorn:
From the glad walls inglorious lumber torn.
Suggeſt, that Jove the peaceful thought inſpir'd,
Leſt they by ſight of ſwords to fury fir'd;
Diſhoneſt wounds, or violence of foul,
Defame the bridal feaſt, and friendly bowl.
The prince obedient to the ſage command,
To Euryclea thus: the female band
In their apartments keep; ſecure the doors:
Theſe ſwarthy arms among the covert ſtores
Are ſeemlier hid; my thoughtleſs youth they blame,
Imbrown'd with vapour of the ſmould'ring flame.
In happy hour, (pleas'd Euryclea cries)
Tutor'd by early woes, grow early wiſe!

imagined by the ſpectator, and made too accurate repreſentations; but Virgil is like Timantes in Pliny. "Timanti plurimum ad-"fuit ingenii, in omnibus operibus ejus intelligitur plus ſemper "quam pingitur;" and again, "oſtendit etiam quæ occultat."

Euſtathius obſerves, that the unexpected opportunity to remove the arms in the abſence of the ſuitors, occaſions this repetition: in the ſixteenth book Ulyſſes told Telemachus he would give a ſign when he ſhould make the removal, deſpairing of an opportunity to give a public direction, without danger from the ſuitors; he therefore wiſely lays hold of the preſent hour which happily favours his deſires, and injoins the arms to be removed immediately.

v. 18. ——— *the female band*
In their apartments keep, &c.]

It is not without ſufficient reaſon that Telemachus diſtruſts the maids; many of them were in the intereſts of the ſuitors: it was therefore neceſſary to conceal the place to which the arms were conveyed, leſt they ſhould betray the ſecret. Euſtathius.

Inſpect with ſharpen'd ſight, and frugal care,
Your patrimonial wealth, a prudent heir.
But who the lighted taper will provide,
(The female train retir'd) your toils to guide?
Without infringing hoſpitable right,
This gueſt (he cry'd) ſhall bear the guiding light:
I cheer no lazy vagrants with repaſt;
They ſhare the meal that earn it ere they taſte.
He ſaid; from female ken ſhe ſtraight ſecures
The purpos'd deed, and guards the bolted doors:
Auxiliar to his ſon, Ulyſſes bears
The plumy-creſted helms, and pointed ſpears,
With ſhields indented deep in glorious wars.
Minerva viewleſs on her charge attends,
And with her golden lamp his toil befriends,

v. 38. *Minerva ——— with her golden lamp ———*] The office here aſcribed to Minerva gave great offence to Rapin, and he cenſured it as mean, and unworthy of the goddeſs; but Euſtathius fully vindicates Homer; Pallas is here an allegorical deity intended by the poet to expreſs the wiſdom of Ulyſſes: he acts with as much prudence as if Minerva herſelf guided him in all his ways. We are to gather from this deſcription, that Ulyſſes formed all the actions of this night with the utmoſt wiſdom, or according to the Greek proverb, ἐν νυκτὶ βουλὴ the "councils of this night" were regulated with the exacteſt prudence and ſecrecy. Spondanus obſerves, that Callimachus, a ſtatuary in Athens, made an image of Minerva according to this picture in Homer: ſhe held a lamp of gold which was filled with an oil of ſuch an unwaſting nature, as not to want to be repleniſhed in the ſpace of a whole year. See lib. i. of Pauſanias. Dacier judges, that though a lamp was unknown in the days of Ulyſſes, yet it might be not ſo in the days of Homer and therefore he might ſpeak of it; for inſtance, the trumpet was not known in the Trojan war, yet Homer mentions it, becauſe it was uſed in his age. But this is no anſwer; for Homer does not ſay that the trumpet was uſed during the ſiege of Troy; if he had, he would have been guilty of a groſs anachroniſm, but he ſpeaks of it by way of alluſion, as a thing well known in his time. Here therefore the caſe is different; for Ulyſſes is the perſon who is ſuppoſed to make uſe of this lamp, and Dacier allows that it was unknown in his age, and conſequently he ought not to uſe it at all. It may therefore perhaps be moſt probable, that Callimachus did not form his ſtatue from this ori-

Not ſuch the ſickly beams, which unſincere,
Gild the groſs vapour of this nether ſphere!
A preſent deity the prince confeſs'd,
And wrapp'd with ecſtacy the ſire addreſs'd.
What miracle thus dazzles with ſurpriſe!
Diſtinct in rows the radiant columns riſe:
The walls where-e'er my wond'ring ſight I turn,
And roofs, amidſt a blaze of glory burn!
Some viſitant of pure etherial race,
With his bright preſence deigns the dome to grace.
Be calm, replies the ſire; to none impart,
But oft' revolve the viſion in thy heart:
Celeſtials, mantl'd in exceſs of light,
Can viſit unapproach'd by mortal ſight.
Seek thou repoſe; whilſt here I ſole remain,
T' explore the conduct of the female train:

ginal; or if this be not allowed, that he fell into an errour, and gave the goddeſs a lamp inſtead of a torch.

I will only further add, that this office of Minerva may be vindicated from all meanneſs, by obſerving that it is not the bare act of carrying the torch which the goddeſs here executes; ſhe improves it into a miracle; the whole palace is enlightened with a celeſtial fire, and Ulyſſes and Telemachus gather full aſſurances of her favour and ſucceſs from that miraculous illumination: this circumſtance raiſes the deſcription out of lowneſs into dignity.

v. 48. *Some viſitant of pure etherial race.*] Euſtathius gives us a twofold explication of the words,

Αὐτὴ τοι Νίκη ἐϛὶ θεῶν ——

They imply either that the goddeſs Themis deſcended, or that it is the cuſtom of celeſtial powers to manifeſt themſelves in ſuch illuminations, without appearing viſible. The latter interpretation ſeems moſt natural, and makes the conſtruction eaſy, whereas the other is ſcarce to be underſtood without ſupplying ἀπὸ before θεῶν: otherwiſe it muſt be allowed, that the former opinion is not unhappy: Ulyſſes tells his ſon, that the goddeſs of juſtice is ſent by the gods to aſſiſt him in taking vengeance on the ſuitors: Themis is a very proper deity to be introduced upon ſuch an occaſion, and ſhews that Ulyſſes proceeded upon the ſtricteſt rules of equity, in the diſtribution of his rewards and puniſhments. But the paſſage will not admit this ſenſe, it being evidently Pallas, not Themis who appears.

The penſive queen perchance deſires to know
The ſeries of my toils, to ſooth her woe.
With tapers flaming day his train attends,
His bright alcove th' obſequious youth aſcends:
Soft ſlumb'rous ſhades his drooping eye-lids cloſe,
'Till on her eaſtern throne Aurora glows.
Whilſt, forming plans of death, Ulyſſes ſtaid,
In council ſecret with the martial maid;
Attendant nymphs in beauteous order wait
The queen, deſcending from her bow'r of ſtate.
Her cheeks the warmer bluſh of Venus wear,
Chaſten'd with coy Diana's penſive air.
An iv'ry ſeat with ſilver ringlets grac'd,
By fam'd Icmalius wrought, the menials plac'd:
With iv'ry ſilver'd thick the foot-ſtool ſhone,
O'er which the panther's various hide was thrown.
The ſov'reign ſeat with graceful air ſhe preſs'd;
To different taſks their toil the nymphs addreſs'd:
The golden goblets ſome, and ſome reſtor'd
From ſtains of luxury the poliſh'd board:
Theſe to remove th' expiring embers came,
While thoſe with unctuous fir foment the flame.
'Twas then Melantho with imperious mien
Renew'd th' attack, incontinent of ſpleen:
Avaunt, ſhe cry'd, offenſive to my ſight!
Deem not in ambuſh here to lurk by night,
Into the woman-ſtate aſquint to pry;
A day-devourer, and an ev'ning ſpy!

v. 69. *By fam'd Icmalius wrought* ———] Homer in both his poems takes all opportunities of celebrating the famous artiſans of antiquity; I doubt not but moſt of them were his particular friends, and to do them honour, he gave them place in his works, and rendered their names and his own gratitude immortal. We may likewiſe learn the nature of the nobleſt pieces of art in Homer's days, from his poetry.

v. 82. *Into the woman-ſtate aſquint to pry.*] This is the true reaſon why Melantho is out of humour (ſays Madam Dacier:) ſhe had ſome affairs upon her hands, which demanded no witneſſes,

Vagrant be gone! before this blazing brand
Shall urge—and wav'd it hiſſing in her hand.
Th' inſulted hero rolls his wrathful eyes,
And, Why, ſo turbulent of ſoul? he cries;
Can theſe lean ſhrivel'd limbs unnerv'd with age,
Theſe poor but honeſt rags, enkindle rage?
In crouds, we wear the badge of hungry fate;
And beg, degraded from ſuperior ſtate!
Conſtrain'd! a rent-charge on the rich I live;
Reduc'd to crave the good I once could give:
A palace, wealth, and ſlaves I late poſſeſs'd,
And all that makes the great be call'd the bleſs'd:
My gate, an emblem of my open ſoul,
Embrac'd the poor, and dealt a bounteous dole.
Scorn not the ſad reverſe, injurious maid!
'Tis Jove's high will, and be his will obey'd!
Nor think thyſelf exempt: that roſy prime
Muſt ſhare the general doom of with'ring time:
To ſome new channel ſoon, the changeful tide
Of royal grace th' offended queen may guide;
And her lov'd lord unplume thy tow'ring pride.
Or were he dead, 'tis wiſdom to beware:
Sweet blooms the prince beneath Apollo's care;

meaning the vicious commerce between her and Eurymachus. Women never forgive their own ſex a frailty. Dacier is undoubtedly in an errour; Eurymachus in the end of the laſt book left the palace and therefore Melantho could not ſpeak out of any apprehenſions of having a ſtop put to her affairs this night, by the preſence of Ulyſſes.

v. 106. *Sweet blooms the Prince beneath Apollo's care.*] It may be aſked why Telemachus is ſaid to owe the preſervation of his life to Apollo? Euſtathius anſwers, that he was called Ὁ θεὸς κουροτρόφος by antiquity; and that Daphne from being his favourite was named κουροθαλείᾳ: but perhaps that epithet was appropriated to Apollo, becauſe all immature deaths in the male ſex were aſcribed to him, as they were to Diana in the female; it may therefore be ſaid with great propriety that it is owing to the favour of Apollo, that Telemachus had not died an immature death, or that he was arrived to manhood: Euſtathius adds, that Apollo

Your deeds with quick impartial eye ſurveys;
Potent to puniſh what he cannot praiſe.
Her keen reproach had reach'd the ſov'reign's ear;
Loquacious inſolent! ſhe cries, forbear:
To thee the purpoſe of my ſoul I told;
Venial diſcourſe, unblam'd, with him to hold:
The ſtoried labours of my wand'ring lord,
To ſoothe my grief he haply may record:
Yet him, my gueſt, thy venom'd rage hath ſtung:
Thy head ſhall pay the forfeit of thy tongue!

as he is the ſun, may be called the nouriſher of all things that breathe, as well as of the inanimate creation; it is owing to his influence that every being comes to maturity, and in this ſenſe likewiſe he may be called Κυροτρόφος. What Euſtathius aſcribes to Daphne, Dacier applies to Diana, and tells us, that ſhe was called Κυροθαλεία, and that the antients celebrated a feſtival in her honour for the health of their infants.

v. 110. *Loquacious inſolent!* ————] Were this place to be rendered literally, it would be thus, "Thou bold impudent "bitch;" θαρσαλέη κύον ἀδδέες. It is ſpoken by Penelope. In our age it is an expreſſion ſo vulgar, as not to be uttered in common converſation, much leſs in epic poetry: it is true, it fully expreſſes the height of impudence, and in Homer's time it was no more mean, than calling a coward a deer, and both the expreſſions are joined together in the firſt of the Iliad.

Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a dear.

It is there ſpoken by Achilles: and in another place of the Iliad Jupiter applies it to his wife, and calls Juno an impudent bitch; a plain indication that the expreſſion was not mean, as it is at this day, becauſe it was uſed by the greateſt of heroes, and the ſupreme of gods.

v. 116. *Thy head ſhall pay the forfeit of thy tongue!*] The expreſſion in the Greek is remarkable.

———— Ὃ σῇ κεφαλῇ ἀναμάξεις.

"Which you ſhall wipe upon your own head," or as Euſtathius explains it, "a crime which you ſhall make to cleave to your own head:" a ſimilar expreſſion (adds the ſame author) occurs in Sophocles.

———— κἀπὶ λῃστοῖσιν κάρα
Κηλῖδας ἐξέμαξεν.

But thou on whom my palace cares depend,
Eurynomè, regard the ſtranger-friend:
A ſeat, ſoft ſpread with furry ſpoils, prepare;
Due diſtant, for us both to ſpeak, and hear.
The menial fair obeys with duteous haſte:
A ſeat adorn'd with furry ſpoils ſhe plac'd:
Due-diſtant for diſcourſe the hero ſat;
When thus the ſov'reign from her chair of ſtate:
Reveal, obſequious to my firſt demand,
Thy name, thy lineage, and thy native land.
He thus: O queen! whoſe far-reſounding fame
Is bounded only by the ſtarry frame,
Conſummate pattern of imperial ſway,
Whoſe pious rule a warlike race obey!
In wavy gold thy ſummer vales are dreſs'd;
Thy autumns bend with copious fruit oppreſs'd:
With flocks and herds each graſſy plain is ſtor'd;
And fiſh of ev'ry fin thy ſeas afford;
Their affluent joys the grateful realms confeſs;
And bleſs the pow'r that ſtill delights to bleſs.

From whence it appears, that the blood that was found upon the ſword, was wiped upon the head of the ſlain; an intimation that his own blood was fallen upon the head of the deceaſed, and the living were free from it. This is a very remarkable cuſtom, and there are many expreſſions like it in the ſcriptures; namely "his "blood be upon his own head." It was cuſtomary amongſt the Romans to waſh their hands, in token of innocence and purity from blood: thus the Roman governour waſhed his hands, and ſaid, "I am innocent of the blood of this juſt perſon."

v. 129. *Conſummate pattern of imperial ſway.*] Homer here gives an amiable picture of a mild and juſt government: it is a truth certain and univerſal, where the ſubject enjoys the fruits of his induſtry, the earth will always be well cultivated, and bring forth in abundance; the ſea will furniſh the land with plenty of fiſhes, and men will plant when they are ſure to gather the fruits. It is the conſtant obſervation of all travellers, the worſt ſituation under an eaſy government enjoys more plenty, and is fuller of inhabitants, than the beſt ſoil and happieſt ſituation under an arbitrary power. This whole paſſage is very beautiful, and the more beautiful becauſe the words proceed from the mouth of a king.

Gracious permit this pray'r, imperial dame!
Forbear to know my lineage, or my name:
Urge not this breaſt to heave, theſe eyes to weep;
In ſweet oblivion let my ſorrow ſleep!
My woes awak'd will violate your ear;
And to this gay cenſorious train appear
A winy vapour melting in a tear.
Their gifts the gods reſum'd (the queen rejoin'd)
Exteriour grace, and energy of mind;
When the dear partner of my nuptial joy,
Auxiliar troops combin'd, to conquer Troy.
My lord's protecting hand alone wou'd raiſe
My drooping verdure, and extend my praiſe!
Peers from the diſtant Samian ſhore reſort;
Here with Dulichians join'd, beſiege the court:
Zacynthus, green with ever-ſhady groves,
And Ithaca, preſumptuous boaſt their loves:
Obtruding on my choice a ſecond lord,
They preſs the Hymenæan rite abhorr'd.
Miſ-rule thus mingling with domeſtic cares,
I live regardleſs of my ſtate-affairs:
Receive no ſtranger-gueſt, no poor relieve;
But ever for my lord in ſecret grieve!—
This art, inſtinct by ſome celeſtial pow'r,
I try'd, eluſive of the bridal hour:
" Ye peers I cry, who preſs to gain a heart,
" Where dead Ulyſſes claims no future part;
" Rebate your loves, each rival ſuit ſuſpend,
" 'Till this funereal web my labours end:
" Ceaſe, 'till to good Laertes I bequeath
" A pall of ſtate, the ornament of death.
" For when to fate he bows, each Grecian dame
" With juſt reproach were licens'd to defame;
" Should he, long honour'd in ſupreme command,
" Want the laſt duties of a daughter's hand."

The fiction pleas'd! their loves I long elude;
The night ſtill ravell'd, what the day renew'd.
Three years ſucceſsful in my art conceal'd,
My ineffectual fraud the fourth reveal'd:
Befriended by my own domeſtic ſpies,
The woof unwrought the ſuitor-train ſurpriſe.
From nuptial rites they now no more recede,
And fear forbids to falſify the breed.
My anxious parents urge a ſpeedy choice,
And to their ſuffrage gain the filial voice:
For rule mature, Telemachus deplores
His dome diſhonour'd, and exhauſted ſtores—
But, ſtranger! as thy days ſeem full of fate,
Divide diſcourſe, in turn thy birth relate:
Thy port aſſerts thee of diſtinguiſh'd race:
No poor unfather'd product of diſgrace.
  Princeſs! he cries, renew'd by your command,
The dear remembrance of my native land,
Of ſecret grief unſeals the fruitful ſource;
And tears repeat their long-forgotten courſe!
So pays the wretch whom fate conſtrains to roam,
The dues of nature to his natal home!—
But inward on my ſoul let ſorrow prey;
Your ſov'reign will my duty bids obey.
  Crete awes the circling waves, a fruitful ſoil!
And ninety cities crown the ſea-born iſle:

v. 196, &c. *Crete*———] It is not without a good reaſon that Ulyſſes is ſo particular in the geography of Crete; he does it, that Penelope from the knowledge of the truth which he ſpeaks concerning that iſland, may be induced to give the readier credit to his ſucceeding fictions. In the Iliad, Homer calls Crete ἑκατόμπολις, or the iſland with an hundred cities, lib. ii.

Crete's hundred cities pour forth all her ſons.

Here he affirms it to have no more than ninety. Strabo is very full upon this difficulty, lib. x. Ephorus (ſays that author) judges that ten cities were built by the Dorians after the Trojan war, under Althæmenes; and therefore Ulyſſes here mentions Crete as

Mix'd with her genuine ſons, adopted names
In various tongues avow their various claims:

having only ninety: but this opinion carries no probability. Others affirm, that ten cities were demoliſhed by the enemies of Idomeneus; but this is no more than a conjecture: the truth is, Homer does not affirm that there were an hundred cities in the time of the war with Troy, but in his own age; (for the poet in that place ſpeaks in his own perſon) if he had put the words into the mouth of any one who had lived in the time of the war, he would not have called it the iſle of the hundred, but ninety cities, according to this deſcription of Ulyſſes; it being very improbable, that ten of the Cretan cities ſhould be deſtroyed, either during the war, or after the return of Idomeneus; for Homer himſelf teſtifies that he returned ſafe to Crete with all his ſoldiers, lib. iii. of the Odyſſey.

And thoſe whom Idomen from Ilion's plain
Had led, ſecurely croſt the dreadful main.

And therefore he had ſufficient forces to defend his country: but though we allow that thoſe ten cities had been deſtroyed after his return, yet how could Ulyſſes come to the knowledge of it, having neither been in Crete, nor met with any Cretan to inform him in all his voyages? It is therefore probable that in the time of the Trojan war Crete had no more than ninety cities, but an hundred in the days of Homer: and this fully reconciles the Iliad with the Odyſſey: in the Odyſſey it is Ulyſſes that ſpeaks, in the Iliad, Homer.

Virgil ſpeaks of Crete after the manner of Homer.

" Creta Jovis magni medio jacet inſula ponto,
" Centum urbes habitant magnas, uberrima regna."

The other ten cities were built by the Dorians (as Ephorus writes) under Althæmenes.

v. 109. *In various tongues* ———] The meaning of this is, that the natural inhabitants of Crete were mixed with ſtrangers who had ſettled in the iſland; or as ſome imagine (ſays Euſtathius) Ulyſſes ſpeaks thus out of fear, leſt Penelope ſhould diſcover him not to be a native of Crete from his wrong pronunciation of the language of the Cretans. We may gather from Strabo, that the Dorians inhabited the eaſtern parts, the Cydonians the weſtern, the Eteo-Cretans the ſouthern, and the reſt of the nation being moſt powerful, poſſeſt the plain country lying toward the north: the Eteo-Cretans, that is, the true Cretans, were the original inhabitants of the iſland, and probably alſo the Cydonians. There is ſome difficulty in the word τριχάϊκες. Andron the hiſtorian (continues Strabo) affirms, that the Dorians who lived near Parnaſſus planted a colony in Crete, and built three cities, and from thence called themſelves τριχάϊκες. " quaſi tripartiti." But Strabo rejects this opinion of Andron, for theſe Dorians poſſeſt four cities, and their country was called τετράπολις; he therefore believes them to have

Cydonians dreadful with the bended yew,
And bold Pelaſgi boaſt a native's due:
The Dorians, plum'd amid the files of war,
Her foodful glebe with fierce Achaians ſhare;
Cnoſſus, her capital of high command;
Where ſcepter'd Minos with impartial hand
Divided right; each ninth revolving year,
By Jove receiv'd in council to confer.

taken that name from a triple creſt, or from having them adorned with hair after the manner of a plumage, from τρίχες ſignifying hair. But perhaps Strabo is in a miſtake, for Thucydides, lib. i. p. 107. and Diodorus, lib. xi. p. 60. confirm the opinion of Andron. The words of Strabo have given great trouble to the commentators, and they ingenuouſly confeſs they cannot underſtand them. The expreſſion is τριχίνους λόφους ἐφαμίλους: the difficulty lies in ἐφαμίλους; but if we read the ſentence thus, all will be plain, τριχίνους λόφους. ἢ ἐφαμίλλους, that is, creſts adorned with hair, or ſomething like it, from ἐφάμιλλος, "æqualis." Dacier.

v. 206. ——— *each ninth revolving year*, &c.] This Minos king of Crete was an excellent lawgiver; and as Ephorus writes, (ſays Strabo) to give his laws the greater veneration he uſed to deſcend into a cave ſacred to Jupiter, and pretend that he had there received them from the mouth of that deity; this is the reaſon why Homer tells us he converſed with Jupiter. Thus alſo Numa Pompilius boaſted of the ſame favour from Ægeria, to make his decrees to be received by the Romans. The only difficulty is in the word ἐννεώρος; and it has been generally believed to imply, that Minos continued in the cave of Jupiter nine whole years: but Caſaubon remarks that it never ſignifies nine years, but every ninth year; as τρίταιος does not mean three days, but the third day; and this agrees exactly with the hiſtory of Minos, (ſee Valerius Maximus, lib. i. cap. 2.) who was accuſtomed to review and rectify all his laws every ninth year. Plato quotes this paſſage in his piece, entitled Minos, and puts this laſt obſervation beyond all diſpute: "Homer tells us (ſays that author) that Minos converſed with Jupiter every ninth year; ἐνάτω ἔτει, and went to be inſtructed by him as a ſcholar by a maſter;" and a little lower he adds, ἐφοίτα δι' ἐνάτου ἔτους εἰς ἄντρον διὸς ὁ Μίνως, &c. that is, "he went into the cave of Jupiter, to learn new laws, or to reform the old which he had received in the former period," τῇ πρότερᾳ ἐννεατερίδι. This Minos was the moſt juſt of all mankind, and for this reaſon was ſuppoſed to be made one of the infernal judges. Plutarch in the life of Demetrius makes a fine remark upon this deſcription of Minos; "Homer (ſays he) has not honoured with the

His ſon Deucalion bore ſucceſſive ſway;
His ſon, who gave me firſt to view the day!
The royal bed an elder iſſue bleſt,
Idomeneus, whom Ilian fields atteſt
Of matchleſs deed: untrain'd to martial toil
I liv'd inglorious in my native iſle,
Studious of peace; and Æthon is my name.
'Twas then to Crete the great Ulyſſes came;
For elemental war, and wint'ry Jove,
From Malea's guſty cape his navy drove
To bright Lucina's fane; the ſhelfy coaſt
Where loud Amniſus in the deep is loſt.

" glorious title of the diſciple of Jupiter, the greateſt warriour or " oppreſſor, or a renowned tyrant; but the man famous for his " juſtice and probity, a legiſlator, and a benefactor to mankind." Dacier.

v. 207. *By Jove receiv'd in council to confer.*] The word in the Greek is ὀαριστὴς, and Plato fully explains it in his Minos; ὄαρος is the diſcourſe, ὀαριστὴς the perſon who diſcourſes; ὁ συνουσιαστὴς ἐν λόγοις: others (continues Plato) underſtand it to ſignify the gueſt of Jupiter, συμπότην, συμπαιστὴν, a perſon that was admitted to the table of Jupiter, or a partaker in his diverſions; but the falſity of this opinion (adds he) will ſufficiently appear, if we remember, that of all the Greeks, the Cretans and Lacedemonians, who learned it from them, alone abſtain from computations, and diverſions ariſing from them; and in particular this is one of the laws of Minos enacted in Crete, μὴ συμπίνειν ἀλλήλοις εἰς μεθὴν, commanding the Cretans not to drink in their entertainments to exceſs. Thus far Dacier; to which I ſhall add that this remark of Plato may perhaps contribute greatly to the glory of Minos, but gives little honour to Jupiter; it inſinuates that a perſon who drinks with that deity might endanger his ſobriety; otherwiſe to be admitted to the table of Jupiter is an inſtance of favour and familiarity, and would have been an honour to Minos. Horace is of this opinion, for ſpeaking of Tantalus, lib. i. Carm. he mentions it as a peculiar teſtimony of favour;

" Occidit & Pelopis genitor, conviva deorum."

That is, according to Homer's expreſſion, θεῶν συνουσιαστὴς or συμπότης

v. 218. *To bright Lucina's fane.*] Strabo informs us that upon the Amniſſus there is a cave ſacred to Ilithya, or Lucina, who preſides over child-birth. The reaſon given by Euſtathius why the poet places the cave by that river is too frivolous to be recited: it

His veſſels moor'd (an incommodious port!)
The hero ſpeeded to the Cnoſſian court:
Ardent the partner of his arms to find;
In leagues of long commutual friendſhip join'd.
Vain hope! ten ſuns had warm'd the weſtern ſtrand,
Since my brave brother with his Cretan band
Had ſail'd for Troy: but to the genial feaſt
My honour'd roof receiv'd the royal gueſt:
Beeves for his train the Cnoſſian peers aſſign,
A public treat, with jars of gen'rous wine.
Twelve days, while Boreas vex'd th' aerial ſpace,
My hoſpitable dome he deign'd to grace:
And when the north had ceas'd the ſtormy roar,
He wing'd his voyage to the Phrygian ſhore.
Thus the fam'd hero, perfected in wiles,
With fair ſimilitude of truth beguiles

is probable that it was called the cave of Ilithya, becauſe ſome great lady had made uſe of it upon an occaſion in which women invoke the aſſiſtance of that goddeſs; or perhaps becauſe water is one of the great principles of generation, the temple of Lucina could not be placed in a more proper ſituation, than upon the banks of a river, and cloſe by the ſea. Dacier.

v. 228. *Beeves for his train the Cnoſſian peers aſſign,*
A public treat ———]

It was not to be expected, and indeed it was almoſt impoſſible that one perſon ſhould entertain Ulyſſes and his whole fleet, which conſiſted of twelve veſſels. This paſſage therefore gives us a remarkable cuſtom of antiquity, which was, that when any perſon with too great a number of attendants arrived in other countries, the prince received the chief perſonage and his particular friends, and the reſt were entertained at the public expence. Dacier.

v. 235. *With fair ſimilitude of truth beguiles.*] The word in the Greek is ἴσκειν, which has been uſually interpreted to be the ſame with ἐλέγχε, but thoſe that ſpeak with more exactneſs derive it from ἴσκε, εἴκαζεν, ἀπεικονίζων πρὸς ἀλήθειαν, that is, he accommodated and adapted his fictions to probability or truth; and Heſychius explains the ſame word by εἰκάζω, ὁμοιῶ: Horace almoſt literally tranſlates this verſe;

"Atque ita mentitur, ſic veris falſa remiſcet,
"Primo ne medium, medio ne diſcrepet imum."

The queen's attentive ear: diſſolv'd in woe,
From her bright eyes the tears unbounded flow.
As ſnows collected on the mountain freeze;
When milder regions breathe a vernal breeze,
The fleecy pile obeys the whiſp'ring gales,
Ends in a ſtream, and murmurs thro' the vales:
So, melted with the pleaſing tale he told,
Down her fair cheek the copious torrent roll'd:

And indeed in this line the whole art of an epic poem is comprehended, which is a mixture of truths and fictions, but fictions conformable to verity; or to ſpeak in the language of a critic, the fable of the epic poem ſhould be both probable and marvellous; aſtoniſhing, yet credible; if it be only credible, it differs in nothing from hiſtory; if only marvellous, it is no better than a romance. The great ſecret therefore of an epic writer is to produce in the reader's mind at the ſame time both belief and aſtoniſhment; and this is here performed by Ulyſſes. Dacier ſur l'Ariſtotle.

v. 238. *As ſnows collected*, &c.] It is not eaſy to take the point of this ſimile. Monſ. Perrault grievouſly miſtakes it: "The de-"ſcription (ſays he) which Homer gives us of the ſorrow of Pene-"lope is very unaccountable; her body melted like ſnow upon an "high mountain, when the eaſt wind melts it, and the ſnow thus "melted fills the rivers; thus it was that the fair cheeks of Pe-"nelope melted." This, ſays Perrault, is tranſlated word for word. But in reality it reſembles Homer in nothing but the repetition of the word "melted," or τήκεσθο, which in modern languages is burthenſome to the ear, but not in the Greek; for the word differs from itſelf according to its different formation, almoſt as much as a new one, and gives a diſtant ſound; for inſtance, τήκεσθο, τήκομένης, κατέτηξεν: whereas there is almoſt an identity of ſound in "melt, melted, or melting;" or in the French, "liqui-"fie, liquifiée, liquiſoient." Neither has Perrault entered into the ſenſe of the compariſon: τήκεται χροὸς is only a figurative hyperbole, as when we ſay a perſon is "conſumed or waſted" with grief; or perhaps τήκω ſignifies no more than "humecto," as τακερὸς "humidus." In reality it is the quantity of tears that is intended to be repreſented, and the ſimile is thus to be underſtood: the ſnows heaped upon the mountains by the cold weſt wind, are the ſorrows accumulated in the ſoul of Penelope; the warm eaſtern wind, which diſſolves theſe ſnows, is the recital of Ulyſſes, which melts thoſe ſorrows into tears, and makes them flow. When Agamemnon weeps, in the ninth Iliad, his tears are compared to a fountain of water falling from a rock; but women being more profuſe of tears, thoſe of Penelope are here compared to a river.

She to her preſent lord laments him loſt,
And views that object which ſhe wants the moſt!
With'ring at heart to ſee the weeping fair,
His eyes look ſtern, and caſt a gloomy ſtare;
Of horn the ſtiff relentleſs balls appear,
Or globes of iron fix'd in either ſphere;
Firm wiſdom interdicts the ſoft'ning tear.

v. 244. *She to her preſent lord laments him loſt.*] Dacier obſerves that this is added by Homer not for our information, for we already know it; but becauſe it is a reflection which muſt neceſſarily occur to every reader; it is a thing extraordinary to lament a perſon preſent, as if he were abſolutely loſt; and we reap a double ſatisfaction from the relation, by obſerving the behaviour of Penelope towards Ulyſſes, and of Ulyſſes towards Penelope; while he is at the ſame time, in one ſenſe both abſent and preſent.

v. 247. *His eyes look ſtern, and caſt a gloomy ſtare.*] There is a beautiful contraſt between Ulyſſes and Penelope; Penelope indulges her paſſion for Ulyſſes; Ulyſſes reſtrains his for Penelope: the picture of Ulyſſes is drawn to the life, he is aſſaulted at once with ſeveral paſſions, aſtoniſhment and admiration on the one ſide, and compaſſion and a deſire to comfort Penelope on the other; theſe paſſions being in an equal balance, and exerting an equal force, he remains fixed, like a wave driven by contrary winds, and yields to neither of their impulſes; it is thus Ulyſſes continues in a ſteady admiration, as if he had loſt all thought. This paſſage is too beautiful not to have been explained by the antients; Plutarch quotes it as an inſtance of the command a wiſe man ought to have over his paſſions. "Ulyſſes who was the moſt eloquent, yet was the moſt "ſilent of men, all his faculties were obedient, and ſubject to rea- "ſon, he commanded his eye not to weep, his tongue not to ſpeak, "and his very heart not to pant or tremble: his reaſon influenced "even his inward motions, and ſubdued the very blood and vital "ſpirit." And in his treatiſe of Moral Virtues, he again quotes theſe verſes; "Ulyſſes had compleatly ſubjected all his faculties to "right reaſon, and he held even his ſpirits, his blood, and his "tears under the government of his judgment." Virgil paints Dido in the infernal ſhades almoſt in the ſame colours with Ulyſſes;

"Illa ſolo fixos oculos averſa tenebat,
"Nec magis incepto vultum ſermone movetur
"Quàm ſi dura ſilex, aut ſtet Marpeſia cautes."

v. 248. *Of horn the ſtiff relentleſs balls appear.*] Euſtathius informs us, that Homer applied this image of horny, or κερατόειδες, to the eye, becauſe one of the coats of it is ſaid to be of an horny ſubſtance; but this is merely fanciful; if another tunic of the eye

A ſpeechleſs interval of grief enſues,
'Till thus the queen the tender theme renews.
Stranger! that ere thy hoſpitable roof
Ulyſſes grac'd, confirm by faithful proof:
Delineate to my view my warlike lord,
His form, his habit, and his train record.
'Tis hard, he cries, to bring to ſudden ſight
Ideas that have wing'd their diſtant flight:
Rare on the mind thoſe images are trac'd,
Whoſe footſteps twenty winters have defac'd:
But what I can, receive.—In ample mode,
A robe of military purple flow'd

had been ſteely, there might have been ſome ground for the alluſion; for Homer joins both of them in the illuſtration, and only meant to repreſent the ſtedfaſtneſs of the eye of Ulyſſes, in this affecting interview.

v. 262, &c. *A robe of military purple*, &c.] This is a remarkable paſſage, and gives us an exact deſcription of the habit of a king in the days of Homer, or perhaps ſtill earlier in the days of Ulyſſes. Purple ſeems antiently to have been appropriated to kings, and to them on whom they beſtowed it; thus Judges viii. 26. the ſacred hiſtorian mentions purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian. Thus Eſther viii. 15. a garment of fine linen and purple is given to a favourite by king Ahaſuerus; and 1 Maccabees xliii. the Jews made a decree, that Simon ſhould wear purple and gold, and that none of the people ſhould wear purple or a buckle of gold without his permiſſion, in token that he was the chief magiſtrate of the Jews; thus alſo 1 Mac. x. 89. Alexander ſent Jonathan a buckle of gold, as the uſe is to be given to ſuch as are of the king's blood. Ulyſſes is here dreſt much after the ſame manner; he wears purple, and a buckle or claſp of gold, as a ſign of his regality. But what I would chiefly obſerve is, that the art of embroidery was known in thoſe early ages, nay perhaps was in greater perfection than at this day; the embroidery was of divers colours, as we may gather from the epithet applied to the fawn, ποικίλον. Some perſons indeed tell us, that this was interwoven into the cloth, and was made in the loom, but the words of Homer will admit of the other interpretation, and it is evident that embroidery was known amongſt the orientals in the age of Ulyſſes, from Judges, v. 30. "Have they not ſped? have they not divided the prey, to Siſera a "prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needle-work, "of divers colours of needle work on both ſides, meet for the necks "of them that take the ſpoil?" Here is evidently mention made of embroidery; and perhaps ſuch was this robe of Ulyſſes; but

O'er all his frame illuſtrious on his breaſt,
The double claſping gold the king conſeſt.
In the rich woof a hound, moſaic-drawn,
Bore on full ſtretch, and ſeiz'd a dappl'd fawn:
Deep in the neck his fangs indent their hold;
They pant and ſtruggle in the moving gold.
Fine as a filmy web beneath it ſhone
A veſt, that dazzl'd like a cloudleſs ſun:
The female train who round him throng'd to gaze,
In ſilent wonder ſigh'd unwilling praiſe.
A ſabre, when the warriour preſs'd to part,
I gave, enamel'd with Vulcanian art:
A mantle purple-ting'd, and radiant veſt,
Dimenſion'd equal to his ſize, expreſt
Affection grateful to my honour'd gueſt.
A fav'rite herald in his train I knew,
His viſage ſolemn ſad, of ſable hue:
Short woolly curls o'erfleec'd his bending head,
O'er which a promontory-ſhoulder ſpread:
Eurybates! in whoſe large ſoul alone
Ulyſſes view'd an image of his own.

however this be, it is manifeſt that all manner of creatures were figured upon the habit of great perſonages, and that thoſe creatures were in-wrought ſo naturally as to ſeem to be alive.

v. 275. ——— —— *radiant veſt,*
Dimenſion'd equal to his ſize———]

It may be aſked what is the meaning of the τερμιόεντα χιτῶνα here mentioned by Ulyſſes? Euſtathius explains it by σύμμετρος, that is, neither too long nor too ſhort, too wide or too ſcanty, but exactly correſponding to the make of the body. Heſiod uſes the ſame word in the ſame ſenſe; and Heſychius interprets it in the ſame manner, Εὔμετρον, καὶ μέχρι τῶν ποδῶν τεταμένον. Dacier.

v. 278. *A fav'rite herald*———] This is very artful in Ulyſſes: Penelope had aſked what kind of perſon her huſband was; Ulyſſes fears to give a deſcription of himſelf, leſt by drawing the copy like the original now before the eyes of Penelope, ſhe ſhould diſcover him to be Ulyſſes: he therefore diverts the enquiry, yet at the ſame time ſatisfies her curioſity, by adding a new circumſtance to confirm his veracity by deſcribing his attendant and herald Eurybates. Dacier.

His ſpeech the tempeſt of her grief reſtor'd,
In all he told ſhe recogniz'd her lord:
But when the ſtorm was ſpent in plenteous ſhow'rs;
A pauſe inſpiriting her languiſh'd pow'rs:
O thou, ſhe cry'd, whom firſt inclement fate
Made welcome to my hoſpitable gate;
With all thy wants the name of poor ſhall end;
Henceforth live honour'd, my domeſtic friend!
The veſt much envy'd on your native coaſt,
And regal robe with figur'd gold emboſt,
In happier hours my artful hand employ'd,
When my lov'd lord this bliſful bow'r enjoy'd:
The fall of Troy erroneous and forlorn
Doom'd to ſurvive, and never to return!
Then he, with pity touch'd: O royal dame!
Your ever-anxious mind, and beauteous frame,
From the devouring rage of grief reclaim.
I not the fondneſs of your ſoul reprove
For ſuch a lord! who crown'd your virgin-love
With the dear bleſſing of a fair increaſe;
Himſelf adorn'd with more than mortal grace:
Yet while I ſpeak, the mighty woe ſuſpend;
Truth forms my tale; to pleaſing truth attend.
The royal object of your deareſt care,
Breathes in no diſtant clime the vital air:
In rich Theſprotia, and the nearer bound
Of Theſſaly, his name I heard renown'd:
Without retinue, to that friendly ſhore
Welcom'd with gifts of price, a ſumleſs ſtore!
His ſacrilegious train, who dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day,
Were doom'd by Jove, and Phœbus' juſt decree,
To periſh in the rough Trinacrian ſea.
To better fate the blameleſs chief ordain'd,
A floating fragment of the wreck regain'd,

And rode the ſtorm; 'till by the billows toſt,
He landed on the fair Phæacian coaſt.
That race who emulate the life of gods,
Receive him joyous to their bleſt abodes:
Large gifts confer, a ready ſail command,
To ſpeed his voyage to the Grecian ſtrand.
But your wiſe lord, (in whoſe capacious ſoul
High ſchemes of pow'r in juſt ſucceſſion roll)
His Ithaca refus'd from ſav'ring fate,
'Till copious wealth might guard his regal ſtate.
Phedon the fact affirm'd, whoſe ſov'reign ſway
Theſprotian tribes, a duteous race, obey:
And bade the gods this added truth atteſt,
(While pure libations crown'd the genial feaſt)
That anchor'd in his port the veſſels ſtand,
To waſt the hero to his natal land.
I for Dulichium urge the wat'ry way,
But firſt the Ulyſſean wealth ſurvey:
So rich the value of a ſtore ſo vaſt
Demands the pomp of centuries to waſte!

v. 327. *His Ithaca refus'd from fav'ring fate,*
'Till copious wealth might guard his regal ſtate.]

Ulyſſes amaſſed great riches by being driven from country to country: every prince where he arrived made him great preſents, according to the laudable cuſtoms of hoſpitality in former ages. The word in the Greek (obſerves Dacier) is ἀγυρτάζειν, it is borrowed from beggars, who by ſtrolling from place to place get their livelihood; and hence it was made uſe of ſimply for to amaſs, or make collections. Heſychius explains it by συλλέγει, πολίζει, ἐγείρει; in which words there are two errours, and it is manifeſt they are corrupted: Monſieur le Fevre reads πωλίζει, ἀγείρει. Dacier.

We may obſerve that Ulyſſes gives himſelf great commendations through this whole interview: he calls himſelf δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς and ſays, that there were few men in the world like him; that he was θεοῖς ἐναλίγκιος, or like the gods: this is not a ſign of vanity or oſtentation, ſince Ulyſſes ſpeaks in the character of a ſtranger: he muſt therefore ſpeak in the ſame manner as a ſtranger would have ſpoke; that is, with honour of Ulyſſes, to ingratiate himſelf with Penelope. Beſides, this conduct conduces to perſuade Penelope, that he is the perſon he pretends to be, and by the conſequence contributes to prevent a diſcovery.

The darling object of your royal love,
Was journey'd thence to Dodonean Jove;
By the ſure precept of the ſilvan ſhrine,
To form the conduct of his great deſign:
Irreſolute of ſoul, his ſtate to ſhrowd
In dark diſguiſe, or come, a king avow'd.
Thus lives your lord; nor longer doom'd to roam:
Soon will he grace this dear paternal dome.
By Jove, the ſource of good, ſupreme in pow'r!
By the bleſt genius of this friendly bow'r!
I ratify my ſpeech; before the ſun
His annual longitude of heav'n ſhall run;
When the pale empreſs of yon' ſtarry train
In the next month renews her faded wane,
Ulyſſes will aſſert his rightful reign.
What thanks! what boon! reply'd the queen, are due,
When time ſhall prove the ſtoried bleſſing true:
My lord's return ſhou'd fate no more retard,
Envy ſhall ſicken at thy vaſt reward.
But my prophetic fears, alas! preſage,
The wounds of deſtiny's relentleſs rage.
I long muſt weep! nor will Ulyſſes come,
With royal gifts to ſend you honour'd home!—
Your other taſk, ye menial train, forbear:
Now waſh the ſtranger, and the bed prepare;

v. 363. *Now waſh the ſtranger*, &c.] This was one of the firſt rites of hoſpitality obſerved towards ſtrangers, amongſt the antients; the ſcriptures abound with inſtances of it: Abraham offers water to waſh the feet of the angels whom he miſtook for ſtrangers, &c. There was alſo a bath for the ſtranger, but this ſeems to have been a greater honour (as Dacier obſerves) than that of waſhing the feet; this may be gathered from the manner in which it was performed; the daughters of the family, even young princeſſes, aſſiſted at the bath; but the waſhing the feet was an office committed to ſervants: thus the daughter of Neſtor, in the third Odyſſey, bathed Telemachus, but Ulyſſes being diſguiſed like a beggar, Euryclea waſhes his feet. This agrees exactly with another paſſage of ſcripture; when David ſent to aſk Abigail to wife, 1 Sam. xxv. 41. ſhe made anſwer, "Let thine handmaid be a ſervant to waſh the feet of the

With ſplendid palls the downy fleece adorn:
Up-riſing early with the purple morn,
His ſinews ſhrunk with age, and ſtiff with toil,
In the warm bath foment with fragrant oil,
Then with Telemachus the ſocial feaſt
Partaking free, my ſole invited gueſt;
Whoe'er neglects to pay diſtinction due,
The breach of hoſpitable right may rue.
The vulgar of my ſex I moſt exceed
In real fame, when moſt humane my deed!
And vainly to the praiſe of queen aſpire,
If, ſtranger! I permit that mean attire,
Beneath the feaſtful bow'r. A narrow ſpace
Confines the circle of our deſtin'd race;
'Tis ours, with good the ſcanty round to grace.
Thoſe who to cruel wrong their ſtate abuſe,
Dreaded in life, the mutter'd curſe purſues;
By death diſ-rob'd of all their ſavage pow'rs,
Then, licens'd rage her hateful prey devours.
But he whoſe in-born worth his acts commend,
Of gentle ſoul, to human race a friend;

" ſervants of my lord." My memory fails me, if there be any other paſſage, either in the Iliad or Odyſſey, where this practice of waſhing the feet is directly mentioned; the reaſon is, this was an office performed only to inferiour perſons; the bath was for heroes and kings. Now both Homer's poems are filled with the characters of ſuch perſonages, and therefore there was no room to mention it in other places: it is true, the word here is ἀπονίψατε, and does not neceſſarily imply the waſhing of the feet, but waſhing in general: yet here it is to be underſtood of the feet, for Euryclea in the act of waſhing them diſcovers this ſtranger to be Ulyſſes.

v. 376. ——— *A narrow ſpace*
Confines the circle of our deſtin'd race.]

The ſenſe is here cut ſhort, and Homer, like a good painter, leaves ſomething to be ſupplied by the reader's imagination. Life is ſhort (ſays Penelope) we ought therefore to employ it in doing good. The motive indeed which ſhe uſes, is not intirely conformable to true theology; ſhe here propoſes glory as the ſole aim of doing virtuous actions; though in other places Homer plainly aſſerts, that we ought to act with piety to pleaſe the gods. Dacier.

The wretched he relieves diffuſe his fame,
And diſtant tongues extol the patron-name.
Princeſs, he cry'd, in vain your bounties flow
On me, confirm'd, and obſtinate in woe,
When my lov'd Crete receiv'd my final view,
And from my weeping eyes her cliffs withdrew;
Theſe tatter'd weeds (my decent robe reſign'd)
I choſe, the livery of a woful mind!
Nor will my heart-corroding cares abate
With ſplendid palls, and canopies of ſtate:
Low-couch'd on earth, the gift of ſleep I ſcorn,
And catch the glances of the waking morn.
The delicacy of your courtly train
To waſh a wretched wand'rer wou'd diſdain;
But if, in track of long experience try'd,
And ſad ſimilitude of woes ally'd,

v. 399. *But if, in track of long experience*, &c.] I will have an old woman to waſh me (ſays Ulyſſes). The reaſon of this requeſt is not evident at firſt view; but Euſtathius explains it by ſhewing that Ulyſſes acts thus to avoid the inſults and contempt of the younger damſels of Penelope, who had ſufficiently outraged him in this and the preceding book; they would think themſelves degraded by performing ſuch an office to a beggar. Euſtathius remarks, that ſome antient critics rejected three verſes here: it is abſurd, ſay they, that Ulyſſes ſhould chuſe Euryclea for this office, who was the only perſon who could diſcover him and ruin his deſigns; he knew ſhe was acquainted with the wound that afterwards diſcovers him: but the truth is, Ulyſſes knew Euryclea to be a perſon of wiſdom, and he was in hopes to draw her over to his intereſt, and make uſe of her in his affairs in the future parts of the Odyſſey; and this he does upon many important occaſions, in particular in locking up the palace at the time of the battle between him and the ſuitors; ſo that by her means he prevents the report of that great incident from being carried to their partizans abroad: here therefore he artfully brings it about, that Euryclea ſhould be aſſigned to this office, not only to avoid the inſults of the other females, but to make uſe of her faithfulneſs and wiſdom to carry on his deſigns, and make the way more eaſy to the ſuitors deſtruction. The choice therefore was prudent; ſhe was aged, and acquainted with human miſeries, not only by reaſon of her age, but had herſelf ſuffered in all the afflictions of Penelope and Telemachus; we find ſhe is deſcribed as a mother to the whole family, and ſhe all along adopts the affections of it: Euſtathius therefore may perhaps be miſtaken when he

Some wretch reluctant views aerial light,
To her mean hand assign the friendly rite.
Pleas'd with his wise reply, the queen rejoin'd:
Such gentle manners, and so sage a mind,
In all who grac'd this hospitable bow'r
I ne'er discern'd, before this social hour.
Such servant as your humble choice requires,
To light receiv'd the lord of my desires,
New from the birth: and with a mother's hand
His tender bloom to manly growth sustain'd:
Of matchless prudence, and a duteous mind;
Tho' now to life's extremest verge declin'd,
Of strength superiour to the toil assign'd.—
Rise, Euryclea! with officious care
For the poor friend the cleansing bath prepare:
This debt his correspondent fortunes claim,
Too like Ulysses, and perhaps the same!
Thus, old with woes my fancy paints him now!
For age untimely marks the careful brow.
Instant obsequious to the mild command,
Sad Euryclea rose: with trembling hand
She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes;
And thus impassion'd to herself replies.

asserts this to be an instance of ill counsels crowned with good success. But then it may be asked, if Euryclea was a person of such wisdom and fidelity, why does not Ulysses trust her with the secret of his return? The reason is plain, it would not only have been contrary to his cautious nature, but a breach of all decency to trust himself to Euryclea, and not to Penelope; this would in some measure have raised the character of the servant above that of his wife and queen. Part of this note I am indebted for to M. Dacier.

v. 422. *She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes.*] Dacier observes that Aristotle in his third book of Rhetoric quotes this action of Euryclea as an instance of a paralogism familiar to Homer; and again in his Poetics he cites it to the same purpose: a paralogism consists in making use of false reasoning, and drawing a false consequence from true premisses: "All men, says Aristotle, are naturally, persuaded that where such a thing is, or is done, such another must happen; we may therefore make them easily believe that if the last is, the first must consequently be; but in

Son of my love, and monarch of my cares!
What pangs for thee this wretched boſom bears!
Are thus by Jove who conſtant beg his aid
With pious deed, and pure devotion, paid?
He never dar'd defraud the ſacred fane,
Of perfect hecatombs in order ſlain:
There oft' implor'd his tutelary pow'r,
Long to protract the ſad ſepulchral hour;
That form'd for empire with paternal care,
His realm might recognize an equal heir.
O deſtin'd head! The pious vows are loſt;
His god forgets him on a foreign coaſt!—

" reality, the latter which we lay down as truth being often falſe, " the former is ſo more frequently, for it does not follow, that " becauſe one thing is, another muſt neceſſarily be; but becauſe " we are perſuaded of the truth of the latter, we conclude falſly, " that the former is alſo true." The reader will enter into the meaning of Ariſtotle, and underſtand what a paralogiſm is, by an example of it; for inſtance, if we were to prove a man to be in love, we bring it as an argument that he is pale: now this is a falſe reaſoning or paralogiſm, becauſe a perſon may be pale from other reaſons than love. Thus in the inſtance of Euryclea " Homer " (ſays Ariſtotle) impoſes upon his reader, by mentioning a ſign " that is known, to draw a conſequence from it, to prove a thing " that is not known;" that is, Homer endeavours to prove that the whole ſtory concerning Euryclea is true, and that ſhe really hid her eyes when ſhe wept, becauſe this is a conſequence of paſſion, and becauſe it is natural for perſons to conceal their eyes with their hands while they weep. This alſo is a paralogiſm, for every ſyllable concerning Euryclea may be a fiction of the poet, though ſuch a geſture is natural to a perſon in her circumſtances; the impoſition conſiſts in this, namely, in the art of the poet, in endeavouring to deceive us into a belief, that becauſe perſons when they weep conceal their eyes, therefore it is true that Euryclea thus actually wept; the latter may be evidently falſe, though the former may be true; Ariſtotle brings this practice of Homer as an example to all poets how to tell lies as they ought, or agreeably.

v. 434. ——— *The pious vows are loſt;*
His god forgets him ———]

Euryclea we ſee is aſtoniſhed to find that a perſon who is remarkable for his piety ſhould be unfortunate; the age was not enlightened enough to know that calamity is often a proof of virtue, and a trial, not a puniſhment. Maximus Tyrius, the Platonic,

Perhaps, like thee, poor gueſt! in wanton pride
The rich inſult him, and the young deride!
Conſcious of worth revil'd, thy gen'rous mind
The friendly rite of purity declin'd;
My will concurring with my queen's command,
Accept the bath from this obſequious hand.
A ſtrong emotion ſhakes my anguiſh'd breaſt;
In thy whole form Ulyſſes ſeems expreſt:
Of all the wretched harbour'd on our coaſt,
None imag'd e'er like thee my maſter loſt.

Thus half diſcover'd thro' the dark diſguiſe,
With cool compoſure feign'd, the chief replies:
You join your ſuffrage to the public vote;
The ſame you think, have all beholders thought.

xxii. Diſſert. excellently explains this ſubject: "Who (ſays that "author) can deny Ulyſſes to be a man of piety? Jupiter remembers him, Minerva loves him, Mercury guides him, Calypſo is "enamoured with him, and Leucothea ſaves his life! Who then "can deny but that heaven tried him with all his afflictions, that "he might appear to be, and deſerve to be called a good man? this "is the reaſon why he ſuffered at Troy, from the ſuitors, by the "Cyclops, by Circe, and by ſhipwreck; this is the reaſon why he "wandered as a vagabond, and a beggar, that he was half naked, "that he was ſtruck and inſulted, and ſuffered a thouſand inſolences from the riots of the ſuitors; it was the favour and love of "heaven that brought him into all theſe afflictions, and not the "anger of Neptune." When a good man ſuffers, heaven frequently chuſes him out as an hero, who knows how to behave bravely in the day of adverſity; and this is agreeable to true theology.

v. 443. *In thy whole form Ulyſſes ſeems expreſt*, &c.] Homer continually draws his reflections from the preſent object: Penelope at the ſight of this diſtreſſed and ill-cloathed ſtranger, breaks out into a tender ſentiment, and cries, "Perhaps my Ulyſſes is ſuch "as he!" for thus Euſtathius applies the expreſſion, ὃ τοιοῦτος ἦν φύσει ἀλλὰ διὰ κάκωσιν; that is, "he was not ſuch by nature, "but misfortune;" but if we underſtand it of a bodily reſemblance, the ſentiment is ſtill beautiful, and the reader cannot without pleaſure ſee Penelope deceived in comparing Ulyſſes with Ulyſſes. Dacier.

v. 447. ——— *the chief replies.*] This is very artful in Ulyſſes: if he had denied the reſemblance, it might have given ſuſpicion; he therefore confeſſes it, and by confeſſing it perſuades Euryclea that he is not the real Ulyſſes. Dacier.

He ſaid: repleniſh'd from the pureſt ſprings,
The laver ſtraight with buſy care ſhe brings:
In the deep vaſe, that ſhone like burniſh'd gold,
The boiling fluid temperates the cold.
Meantime revolving in his thoughtful mind
The ſcar, with which his manly knee was ſign'd;
His face averting from the crackling blaze,
His ſhoulders intercept th' unfriendly rays.
Thus cautious in th' obſcure he hop'd to fly
The curious ſearch of Euryclea's eye.
Cautious in vain! nor ceas'd the dame to find
The ſcar with which his manly knee was ſign'd.

v. 456. *His face averting from the crackling blaze.*] The reaſon why Ulyſſes turns toward the darkneſs is to avoid diſcovery, and that Euryclea might not examine him too curiouſly: but this is not the whole deſign of Homer; the poet thus deſcribes Ulyſſes to give probability to the future ſtory; for as Euſtathius judiciouſly remarks, it is from this action alone that the fainting of Euryclea, her laying her hand on the chin of Ulyſſes, his ſeizure of her throat to hinder her from diſcovering him, eſcape the notice of Penelope; Ulyſſes is ſeated out of view, and withdrawn from obſervation. Dacier.

v. 460. *Cautious in vain! nor ceas'd the dame to find*
The ſcar———]

This ſtory concerning the wound of Ulyſſes, may, I fear, in ſome parts of it, ſeem ſomewhat tedious; it may therefore be neceſſary to ſhew that it is introduced with judgment; and though not intirely entertaining, yet artful.

Ariſtotle in the eighth chap. of his Poetics, ſpeaking of the union of the action of the Odyſſey, mentions this wound of Ulyſſes. Homer, ſays he, who excelled other poets in all reſpects, ſeems perfectly to have known this defect, (viz. that all the actions of an hero do not conſtitute the unity of the action, but only ſuch as are capable to be united with the fable) for in compoſing his Odyſſey, he has not mentioned all the adventures of Ulyſſes: for example, hs has not joined the wound he received upon Parnaſſus with the account of his feigned madneſs, when the Greeks aſſembled their army; for becauſe one of them happened, it was neither neceſſary nor probable that the other ſhould alſo happen; but he has inſerted all that could have reſpect to one and the ſame action. Monſieur Dacier fully explains Ariſtotle; We have in this precept (obſerves that author) two remarkable events in the life of Ulyſſes, his feigned madneſs, and his wound received upon Par-

This on Parnaſſus (combating the boar)
With glancing rage the tuſky ſavage tore.
Attended by his brave maternal race,
His grandſire ſent him to the ſilvan chace,
Autolycus the bold: (a mighty name
For ſpotleſs faith and deeds of martial fame:

naſſus: the poet mentions the wound, but is ſilent about his madneſs: he ſaw that the latter had no connexion either in truth or probability with the ſubject of his poem, and therefore he ſays not a word of it; he has acted otherwiſe with reſpect to the wound received upon Parnaſſus: for although that wound was no more to the matter of his poem, than the madneſs, yet he ſpeaks of it, becauſe he found an opportunity of inſerting it ſo naturally into his principal action, that it becomes a neceſſary part of it, ſince it cauſes a remembrance of his hero, that is, ſince it is the occaſion of Euryclea's diſcovering Ulyſſes; ſo that this hiſtory which is here related at length is no foreign epiſode, but a natural part of the ſubject, by being thus artfully united to it. This fully teaches us of what nature the different parts which a poet uſes to form one and the ſame action ought to be; namely, either neceſſary or probable conſequences of one another, as the remembrance of Ulyſſes was of this wound: every adventure then that has not this connexion ought to be rejected as foreign, and as breaking the unity of the action: and therefore Homer took care not to interrupt the unity of his Odyſſey, by the epiſode of the feigned madneſs of Ulyſſes; or that incident could not be produced by any that were neceſſary or proper to the poem, nor produce any that had the leaſt relation to it.

Boſſu fully agrees with Ariſtotle and Dacier, and gathers from this epiſode that ſome incidents which make not directly any part of the action or the fable may be inſerted into a poem, if thoſe incidents are neceſſary to clear up any part of the fable or action.

This remembrance, or diſcovery by the wound, is mentioned in another place; ſee the twenty-firſt Odyſſey. Ariſtotle in his ſeventeenth chap. of the poetics, prefers this remembrance to that there made to Eumæus: It is (obſerves that author) here managed with more addreſs and art; it is done without deſign, and ſeems a conſequence of the ſtory: there Ulyſſes himſelf diſcovers the wound: here it ariſes from the ſubject, and a ſeries of incidents: there Ulyſſes has recourſe to it, and it cauſes no ſurpriſe, becauſe there is no great art in ſhewing a mark, which we are willing to have known. All remembrances therefore (ſays Ariſtotle) which produce their effects by deſign have little ingenuity: whereas thoſe which are brought about by chance, ſurpriſe us, and are inſtances of the poet's art and addreſs.

v. 466. *Autolycus the bold: (a mighty name*
For ſpotleſs faith———]

Hermes his patron-god thoſe gifts beſtow'd,
Whoſe ſhrine with weanling lambs he wont to load.)

This difficult paſſage is well explained by Dacier and Euſtathius: the words are

— ὃς ἀνθρώπους ἐκέκαστο
Κλεπτοσύνῃ θ' ὅρκῳ τε —

which literally run thus, "he ſurpaſſed all men in ſwearing and "ſtealing:" a terrible character! if it were to be underſtood according to the letter: it has been imagined, that Homer commends Autolycus for his addreſs in robbery, and making equivocal oaths; like the perſon (ſays Euſtathius) who made a truce with his enemies for ſeveral days, and immediately went and ravaged their territories by night, and defended it, by telling them that the truce was not made for the night but the day: or like the perſon mentioned by Athenæus, who ſtole a fiſh, and gave it to his neighbour, and being queſtioned about it, ſwore that he had it not himſelf, nor ſaw any other perſon ſteal it: but this is not the meaning of Homer, for he calls Autolychus ἔσθλος or a "good man," and adds that this κλεπτοσύνη καὶ ὅρκος was the gift of a god. The truth is, the former word does not here ſignify theft, nor the latter perjury: the former ſignifies a laudable addreſs in concealing our own deſigns, and diſcovering thoſe of our enemies; it conſiſts in ſurpriſing them, when they leaſt expect us, in beating up their quarters, carrying off their convoys, their proviſions, and in ſhort in all manner of ſtratagems, authorized by the laws of war: ὅρκος ſignifies fidelity in obſerving an oath, and never violating the ſanctity of it. Plato, in his firſt book de Repub. makes it plain, that this is the ſenſe of Homer: he there quotes this paſſage, and aſſerts that he is the beſt guardian of an army, who knows how to ſteal the counſels and enterprizes of the enemy, τὰ τῶν πολεμίων κλέπτειν βουλεύματα, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας πράξεις; from this, it is there inferred, that juſtice is a kind of chicanery (κλεπτική τις ἐπ' ὠφελείᾳ φίλων, καὶ βλάβῃ τῶν ἐχθρῶν) by which we ſerve our friends, and bring detriment to our enemies; but the anſwer there given to this aſſertion is, οὐ μὰ τὸν Δία, or, by no means: it muſt be underſtood with ſome reſtriction: it is lawful to deceive an enemy in war, but in common life criminal. The qualities therefore that Homer commends in Autolycus, are his dexterity in diſcovering, penetrating and preventing the deſigns of his enemies, and the religious obſervance of his oaths, and not theft and perjury: Euſtathius explains Homer by adding κλεπτοσύνην οὐ κακὴν, ὅρκον οὐ ψεῦδος.

v. 468. *Hermes his patron-god thoſe gifts beſtow'd.*] The reaſon why Homer attributes theſe gifts to Mercury is, becauſe he was the preſident of ſociety, or of all things that are acted with a deſire of concealment. He is alſo the god of ſpeech, it therefore appertained to that deity to guard the verity of it, in particular of oaths, being the preſident of ſpeaking. Dacier.

His courſe to Ithaca this hero ſped,
When the firſt product of Laertes' bed
Was new diſcles'd to birth; the banquet ends,
When Euryclea from the queen deſcends,
And to his fond embrace the babe commends.
" Receive, ſhe cries, your royal daughter's ſon;
" And name the bleſſing that your pray'rs have won."
Then thus the hoary chief, " My victor arms
" Have aw'd the realms around with dire alarms:
" A ſure memorial of my dreaded fame
" The boy ſhall bear; Ulyſſes be his name!
" And when with filial love the youth ſhall come
" To view his mother's ſoil, my Delphic dome
" With gifts of price ſhall ſend him joyous home."
Lur'd with the promis'd boon, when youthful prime
Ended in man, his mother's natal clime
Ulyſſes ſought; with fond affection dear
Amphithea's arms receiv'd the royal heir:

v. 476. " *Receive, ſhe cries, your royal daughter's ſon*, &c.] We have here an antient cuſtom obſerved by the Greeks: the child was placed by the father upon the grandfather's knees, as a token that a grandchild was the moſt agreeable preſent that a ſon could make to a father. That this was an ancient cuſtom is evident from the Iliad.

——συγερὰς δ' ἐπεκέκλετ' Ἐρινῦς
Μήποτε γούνασιν εἷσιν ἑφέσσεσθαι φίλον υἱόν
Ἐξ ἐμέθεν γεγαῶτα ——

That is, the father of Phœnix imprecated the furies, that Phœnix might never have a ſon to place upon his grandfather's knees.

It has been already remarked that it was cuſtomary in Greece for the parents to name the child; here the grandfather names Ulyſſes: but this is done by permiſſion of the parents, for Autolycus bids them give the name.

Γαμβρὸς ἐμὸς δυγάτης τε τίθεσθ' ὄνομ'.

Ulyſſes was called Ὀδυσσεὺς from Ὀδύσσω, " iraſcor;" implying (ſays Euſtathius) that many hated, or were enraged at, Autolycus, for the miſchiefs he had done by his art in war, ἐκ τῦ μίσους διὰ κλεπτοσύνην: that is in other words, Autolycus called Ulyſſes Ὀδυσσεὺς from the terrour he had been to his enemies.

Her antient * lord an equal joy poſſeſt;
Inſtant he bade prepare the genial feaſt:
A ſteer to form the ſumptuous banquet bled,
Whoſe ſtately growth five flow'ry ſummers fed:
His ſons divide, and roaſt with artful care
The limbs; then all the taſteful viands ſhare.
Nor ceas'd diſcourſe (the banquet of the ſoul)
'Till Phœbus wheeling to the weſtern goal
Reſign'd the ſkies, and night involv'd the pole.
Their drooping eyes the ſlumb'rous ſhade oppreſt,
Sated they roſe, and all retir'd to reſt.
Soon as the morn, new-rob'd in purple light,
Pierc'd with her golden ſhafts the rear of night;
Ulyſſes, and his brave maternal race
The young Autolyci, aſſay the chace.
Parnaſſus, thick perplex'd with horrid ſhades,
With deep-mouth'd hounds the hunter-troop invades;
What time the ſun, from ocean's peaceful ſtream,
Darts o'er the lawn his horizontal beam.
The pack impatient ſnuff the tainted gale;
The thorny wilds the wood-men fierce aſſail:
And foremoſt of the train, his cornel ſpear
Ulyſſes wav'd, to rouſe the ſavage war.
Deep in the rough receſſes of the wood,
A lofty copſe, the growth of ages, ſtood:
Nor winter's boreal blaſt, nor thund'rous ſhow'r,
Nor ſolar ray, cou'd pierce the ſhady bow'r,
With wither'd foliage ſtrew'd, a heapy ſtore!
The warm pavilion of a dreadful boar.
Rous'd by the hounds and hunters mingling cries,
The ſavage from his leafy ſhelter flies:
With fiery glare his ſanguine eye-balls ſhine,
And briſtles high impale his horrid chine.

* Autolycus.

Young Ithacus advanc'd, defies the foe,
Poiſing his lifted lance in act to throw;
The ſavage renders vain the wound decreed,
And ſprings impetuous with opponent ſpeed!
His tuſks oblique he aim'd, the knee to gore;
Aſlope they glanc'd, the ſinewy fibres tore,
And bar'd the bone: Ulyſſes undiſmay'd,
Soon with redoubl'd force the wound repay'd;
To the right ſhoulder-joint the ſpear apply'd:
His further flank with ſtreaming purple dy'd:
On earth he ruſh'd with agonizing pain:
With joy, and vaſt ſurpriſe, th' applauding train
View'd his enormous bulk extended on the plain.
With bandage firm Ulyſſes knee they bound;
Then chanting myſtic lays, the cloſing wound
Of ſacred melody confeſs'd the force;
The tides of life regain'd their azure courſe

v. 535. *Then chanting myſtic lays, the cloſing wound*
Of ſacred melody confeſs'd the force.]

This is a remarkable inſtance of the antiquity of that idle ſuperſtition of curing wounds by incantation or charms: yet Homer is no way blameable for mentioning it; he wrote according to the opinion of the age, which whether true or falſe vindicates him as a poet. Indeed almoſt all other poets have ſpoken more boldly than Homer of the power of incantations; thus Virgil,

"Carmina vel cœlo poſſunt deducere lunam,
"Carminibus Circe ſocios mutavit Ulyſſei,
"Frigidus in pratis cantando rumpitur anguis."

But we may defend Homer from Pliny, who has thought this point, viz. whether charms are available phyſically, worthy of a ſerious diſcuſſion; he refers to this paſſage in his Natural Hiſtory, lib. xxviii. cap. 1. "Dixit Homerus profluvium ſanguinis vulne-
"rato ſemine Ulyſſem inhibuiſſe carmine: Theophraſtus, Iſchia-
"dicos ſanare: Cato prodidit luxatis membris carmen auxiliari,
"Varro; Podagris." Attatus affirms, that if a man chance to ſpy a ſcorpion, and pronounce the word "duo," it will lie ſtill, and never ſhoot his ſting. I think theſe grave authors outdo even the fictions of poets; and I hardly believe that any of them would have ventured to provoke a ſerpent truſting to the charm. But we are to underſtand this charm not merely as a form of words, but

Then back they led the youth with loud acclaim;
Autolycus, enamour'd with his fame,
Confirm'd the cure: and from the Delphic dome
With added gifts return'd him glorious home.
He ſafe at Ithaca with joy receiv'd,
Relates the chace, and early praiſe atchiev'd.
Deep o'er his knee inſeam'd, remain'd the ſcar:
Which noted token of the woodland war
When Euryclea found, th' abluſion ceas'd;
Down dropp'd the leg, from her ſlack hand releas'd;
The mingled fluids from the vaſe redound;
The vaſe reclining floats the floor around!
Smiles dew'd with tears the pleaſing ſtrife expreſt
Of grief, and joy, alternate in her breaſt.
Her flutt'ring words in melting murmurs dy'd;
At length abrupt—my ſon!—my king!—ſhe cry'd.

as joined with muſical notes, and then it may appear more rational: for the cure of the ſciatica, Theophraſtus commends the Phrygian muſic, and A. Gellius for giving eaſe to it; but adds, "ut memoriæ proditum eſt." Apollonius in his book de Miris, affirms from Theophraſtus, that muſic cures many diſeaſes both of mind and body, καθάπερ λειποθυμιάς, φόβους, καὶ τὰς ἐπὶ μακρὸν γιγνομένας τῆς διανοίας ἐκστάσεις; ἰᾶται δὲ καταύλησις ἰσχιάδα καὶ ἐπιληψίαν And the ſame author affirms, that many in his time, eſpecially the Thebans, uſed the pipe for the cure of ſeveral ſickneſſes, which Galen calls καταυλεῖν τὸ τόπῳ, "ſuper loco affecto tibiâ canere;" or "loca dolentia decantare." I will not affirm that ſuch charms of muſic have no power in ſome maladies; every one knows what an effect the harp of David had over the ſpirits of Saul; but we have either loſt, or not yet found out the art: a natural reaſon may be aſſigned for it; for as the muſical notes move the air, ſo the air moves the inward ſpirits, and the humours of the body, which are the ſeat of diſeaſes; ſo that by this new motion they may be condenſed, rarified, diſſipated or expelled, according as they are agitated or influenced by the concuſſion of the muſical notes; but however this be, if other poets may ſay that charms have power to ſtop the rivers in their courſes, Homer is not to be condemned for aſcribing the power of ſtopping blood to incantations. See Mr. Cowley's notes on the firſt book of his Davideis.

v. 553.——*abrupt*——*my ſon!*——*my king!*——*ſhe cry'd.*] It may ſeem incredible that this dialogue between Ulyſſes and Euryclea could be held in the preſence of Penelope, and ſhe not hear it: how

His neck with fond embrace infolding faſt,
Full on the queen her raptur'd eye ſhe caſt,
Ardent to ſpeak the monarch ſafe reſtor'd:
But ſtudious to conceal her royal lord,
Minerva fix'd her mind on views remote,
And from the preſent bliſs abſtracts her thought.
His hand to Euryclea's he apply'd,
Art thou foredoom'd my peſt? the hero cry'd:
Thy milky founts my infant lips have drain'd:
And have the fates thy babling age ordain'd
To violate the life thy youth ſuſtain'd?
An exile have I told, with weeping eyes,
Full twenty annual ſuns in diſtant ſkies:
At length return'd, ſome god inſpires thy breaſt
To know thy king, and here I ſtand confeſt.
This heav'n-diſcover'd truth to thee conſign'd,
Reſerve, the treaſure of thy inmoſt mind:
Elſe if the gods my vengeful arm ſuſtain,
And proſtrate to my ſword the ſuitor-train:
With their lewd mates, thy undiſtinguiſh'd age
Shall bleed a victim to vindictive rage.

is this to be reconciled to probability? I will anſwer in the words of Euſtathius: The poet, ſays he, is admirably guarded againſt this objection; it is for this reaſon that he mentions the falling of Ulyſſes's leg into the water, the ſound of the veſſel from that accident, the overturning of it, and the effuſion of the water: all theſe different ſounds may eaſily be ſuppoſed to drown the voice of Euryclea, ſo as it might not be heard by Penelope; it is true, ſhe could not but obſerve this confuſion that happened while Euryclea waſhes; but the age of Euryclea might naturally make her believe that all this happened by accident through her feebleneſs, and Penelope might be perſuaded that it was thus occaſioned, having no reaſon to ſuſpect the truth: beſides, what is more frequent on the theatre than to ſpeak to the audience, while the perſons on the ſtage are ſuppoſed not to hear? In reality, it is evident that Ulyſſes and Euryclea were at a proper diſtance from Penelope, probably out of decency while the feet were waſhing; for as ſoon as that office is over, Homer tells us that Ulyſſes drew nearer to the fire where Penelope ſat, that he might reſume the conference.

Αὖτις ἀρ' ἀσσοτέρω πωλὸς ἕλκετο δίφρον Ὀδυσσεύς.

Then thus rejoin'd the dame, devoid of fear:
What words, my ſon, have paſs'd thy lips ſevere?
Deep in my ſoul the truſt ſhall lodge ſecur'd;
With ribs of ſteel, and marble heart, immur'd.
When heav'n, auſpicious to thy right avow'd,
Shall proſtrate to thy ſword the ſuitor-crowd;
The deeds I'll blazon of the menial fair;
The lewd to death devote, the virtuous ſpare.
Thy aid avails me not, the chief reply'd;
My own experience ſhall their doom decide;
A witneſs-judge precludes a long appeal:
Suffice it thee thy monarch to conceal.
He ſaid: obſequious with redoubl'd pace,
She to the fount conveys th' exhauſted vaſe:
The bath renew'd, ſhe ends the pleaſing toil
With plenteous unction of ambroſial oil.
Adjuſting to his limbs the tatter'd veſt,
His former ſeat receiv'd the ſtranger gueſt;
Whom thus with penſive air the queen addreſt.
Tho' night, diſſolving grief in grateful eaſe,
Your drooping eyes with ſoft oppreſſion ſeize;

v. 577. *Deep in my ſoul the truſt ſhall lodge ſecur'd.*] Plutarch in his treatiſe upon Garrulity obſerves, that Ulyſſes and every perſon that had relation to him were remarkable for their taciturnity: they had all profited under ſo great a maſter of ſecrecy as Ulyſſes: it is practiſed by his wife, his ſon, and his nurſe; his very companions, who attended him in his voyages, poſſeſſed this virtue in ſo eminent a degree, as to ſuffer themſelves to be daſhed in pieces by the Cyclops, rather than diſcover him to that giant. The moral that we are to gather from this fable is, that the ſafety of princes counſels conſiſts in ſecrecy. Dacier.

v. 590. *With plenteous unction*——] We are not to imagine that this cuſtom of anointing the feet was an inſtance of luxury; it prevailed over the oriental world ſolely out of neceſſity, to avoid offenſiveneſs in thoſe hot regions. This cuſtom prevailed many ages after Homer, and we have an inſtance of it in the woman who waſhed the feet of our Lord and Saviour with tears, and anointed them with oil. This place is a plain proof that oil was uſed after waſhing the feet as well as after bathing.

A-while, reluctant to her pleaſing force,
Suſpend the reſtful hour with ſweet diſcourſe.
The day (ne'er brighten'd with a beam of joy!)
My menials, and domeſtic cares employ:
And, unattended by ſincere repoſe,
The night aſſiſts my ever-wakeful woes:
When nature's huſh'd beneath her brooding ſhade,
My echoing griefs the ſtarry vault invade.
As when the months are clad in flow'ry green,
Sad Philomel, in bow'ry ſhades unſeen,

v. 605. *Sad Philomel*, &c.] This paſſage is thus explained by Euſtathius. The ſimile is not only introduced to expreſs the ſorrow of Penelope, but the nature of it; it is not ſo much intended to illuſtrate her grief, as her various agitations and different thoughts compared to the different accents in the mournful ſong of the nightingale; for thus Homer applies it.

Ὡς καὶ ἐμοὶ δίχα θυμὸς ὀρώρεται ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα

Euſtathius adds, that Homer relates this ſtory very differently from later authors: he mentions nothing of Progne, Tereus, or Pandion, unleſs that name be the ſame with Pandareus; Itylus likewiſe is by them called Itys. The ſtory is thus, according to theſe writers: Philomela was the wife of Tereus king of Thrace, ſhe had a ſiſter named Progne, whom Tereus raviſhed and cut her tongue out, that ſhe might not diſcover the crime to Philomela; but Progne betrayed it by weaving the ſtory in a piece of embroidery; upon this Philomela ſlew her own ſon Itys or Itylus, and ſerved up his fleſh to the table of her huſband Tereus; which being made known to him, he purſues Philomela and Progne, who are feigned to be changed into birds for their ſwift flight into Athens, by which they eſcaped the revenge of Tereus. Philomela is fabled to be turned into a nightingale, and Progne into a ſwallow; it being obſerved by Pauſanias, that no ſwallow ever builds in Thrace, or nightingale is ever ſeen there, as hating the country of Tereus. But Homer follows a different hiſtory: Pandareus, ſon of Merops, had three daughters, Meropè, Cleothena, and Aëdon: Pandareus married his eldeſt daughter Aëdon to Zethus, brother of Amphion, mentioned in the eleventh Odyſſey; ſhe had an only ſon named Itylus: and being envious at the numerous family of her brother-in-law Amphion, ſhe reſolves to murder Amaleus the eldeſt of her nephews; her own ſon Itylus was brought up with the children of Amphion, and lay in the ſame bed with this Amaleus. Aëdon directs her ſon Itylus to abſent himſelf one night from the bed, but he forgets her orders; at the time determined, ſhe conveys

To vernal airs attunes her varied ſtrains;
And Itylus ſounds warbling o'er the plains:
Young Itylus, his parents darling joy!
Whom chance miſled the mother to deſtroy:
Now doom'd a wakeful bird to wail the beauteous boy.
So in nocturnal ſolitude forlorn,
A ſad variety of woes I mourn!
My mind reflective, in a thorny maze
Devious from care to care inceſſant ſtrays.
Now, wav'ring doubt ſucceeds to long deſpair;
Shall I my virgin-nuptial-vow revere;
And joining to my ſon's my menial train,
Partake his councils, and aſſiſt his reign!
Or, ſince mature in manhood, he deplores
His dome diſhonour'd, and exhauſted ſtores;
Shall I, reluctant! to his will accord;
And from the peers ſelect the nobleſt lord;
So by my choice avow'd, at length decide
Theſe waſteful love-debates, a mourning bride?
A viſionary thought I'll now relate,
Illuſtrate, if you know, the ſhadow'd fate.
A team of twenty geeſe (a ſnow-white train!)
Fed near the limpid lake with golden grain,
Amuſe my penſive hours. The bird of Jove
Fierce from his mountain-eyrie downward drove;
Each fav'rite fowl he pounc'd with deathful ſway,
And back triumphant wing'd his airy way.
My pitying eyes effus'd a plenteous ſtream,
To view their death thus imag'd in a dream:
With tender ſympathy to ſoothe my ſoul,
A troop of matrons, fancy-form'd, condole.

herſelf into the apartment, and murthers her own ſon Itylus, by miſtake, inſtead of her nephew Amaleus: upon this, almoſt in diſtraction, ſhe begs the gods to remove her from the race of human kind; they grant her prayer, and change her into a nightingale.

But whilſt with grief and rage my boſom burn'd,
Sudden the tyrant of the ſkies return'd:
Perch'd on the battlements he thus began,
(In form an eagle, but in voice a man)
O queen! no vulgar viſion of the ſky
I come prophetic of approaching joy:
View in this plumy form thy victor lord;
The geeſe (a glutton race) by thee deplor'd
Portend the ſuitors fated to my ſword.
This ſaid, the pleaſing feather'd omen ceas'd.
When from the downy bands of ſleep releas'd,
Faſt by the limpid lake my ſwan-like train
I found, inſatiate of the golden grain.
The viſion ſelf-explain'd (the chief replies)
Sincere reveals the ſanction of the ſkies:
Ulyſſes ſpeaks his own return decreed;
And by his ſword the ſuitors ſure to bleed.
Hard is the taſk, and rare, the queen rejoin'd,
Impending deſtinies in dreams to find:
Immur'd within the ſilent bow'r of ſleep,
Two portals firm the various phantoms keep:

v. 656. *Immur'd within the ſilent bow'r of ſleep*, &c.] This ſeems to be bold a fiction, and commentators have laboured hard to ſhew the reaſon of it: ſome imagine, that by the horn is meant a tunic of the eye, which is called horny; and that the ivory repreſents the teeth; and that by theſe alluſions the poet intended to expreſs that what we hear ſpoken may be falſe, but what we ſee muſt infallibly be true: that is, according to this fable, the ivory gate emits falſhood, that of horn, truth. Others explain Homer by referring to the nature of horn and ivory, horn being pervious to the ſight, and ivory impenetrable. Dacier, from Euſtathius, gives us a very different ſolution; by horn, which is tranſparent, Homer means the air, or heavens which are tranſlucent; by ivory, he denotes the earth which is groſs and opake: thus the dreams which come from the earth, that is, through the gate of ivory, are falſe; thoſe from heaven, or through the gate of horn, true. But it may be thought that there are no grounds, from the words of Homer, for ſuch an interpretation. I imagine that this fable is built upon a real foundation, and that there were places called the gates of falſhood and truth: Diodorus Siculus, in his

Of iv'ry one; whence flit to mock the brain,
Of winged lies a light fantaſtic train:
The gate oppos'd pellucid valves adorn,
And columns fair incas'd with poliſh'd horn:
Where images of truth for paſſage wait,
With viſions manifeſt of future fate.
Not to this troop, I fear, that phantom ſoar'd,
Which ſpoke Ulyſſes to his realm reſtor'd:
Deluſive ſemblance!———But my remnant life
Heav'n ſhall determine in a gameful ſtrife:
Whith that fam'd bow Ulyſſes taught to bend,
For me the rival archers ſhall contend.
As on the liſted field he us'd to place
Six beams, oppos'd to fix in equal ſpace:
Elanc'd a-far by his unerring art,
Sure thro' ſix circlets flew the whizzing dart.
So, when the ſun reſtores the purple day,
Their ſtrength and ſkill the ſuitors ſhall aſſay:
To him the ſpouſal honour is decreed,
Who thro' the rings directs the feather'd reed.
Torn from theſe walls where long the kinder pow'rs
With pomp and joy have wing'd my youthful hours!

ſecond book, deſcribing the ceremonies concerning the dead, mentions the gates of oblivion, of hatred and lamentation; and then adds, that there are other gates in the ſame place; namely, in Memphis in Ægypt, that are called the gates of verity, near which there is a ſtatue of juſtice without an head; now Homer in the twenty-fourth Odyſſey places the region of dreams in the way to the infernal ſhades, and it is paſt diſpute that he borrows all theſe fables of Styx, Cocytus, (that is, of the gates of hatred lamentation,) &c. from Ægypt, and places them in hell, after Orpheus, who adapted all his ceremonies, according to the rites of burial obſerved at Memphis, as Diodorus fully proves: if therefore he borrows the fable of the gates of oblivion, &c. from Ægypt, why may he not the ſtory of the gates of falſhood and verity? eſpecially ſince he takes his whole relation concerning hell from the cuſtoms of the Ægyptians, and this region of dreams is placed by him in the paſſage to hell: it may therefore not be impoſſible but this ſtory of the gates of ſleep, may have a real foundation, and be built upon the cuſtoms of the Ægyptians.

On this poor breaſt no dawn of bliſs ſhall beam ;
The pleaſure paſt ſupplies a copious theme
For many a dreary thought, and many a doleful dream !

Propoſe the ſportive lot, the chief replies,
Nor dread to name yourſelf the bowyer's prize :
Ulyſſes will ſurpriſe th' unfiniſh'd game
Avow'd, and falſify the ſuitors claim.

To whom with grace ſerene the queen rejoin'd :
In all thy ſpeech what pleaſing force I find !
O'er my ſuſpended woe thy words prevail,
I part reluctant from the pleaſing tale.
But heav'n that knows what all terreſtrials need,
Repoſe to night, and toil to day decreed :
Grateful viciſſitude ! Yet me withdrawn,
Wakeful to weep and watch the tardy dawn
Eſtabliſh'd uſe enjoins ; to reſt and joy
Eſtrang'd, ſince dear Ulyſſes ſail'd to Troy !
Meantime inſtructed is the menial tribe
Your couch to faſhion as yourſelf preſcribe.

Thus affable, her bow'r the queen aſcends ;
The ſov'reign ſtep a beauteous train attends ;
There imag'd to her ſoul Ulyſſes roſe ;
Down her pale cheek new-ſtreaming ſorrow flows :
'Till ſoft oblivious ſhade Minerva ſpread,
And o'er her eyes ambroſial ſlumber ſhed.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK XX.

THE ARGUMENT.

While Ulyſſes lies in the veſtibule of the palace, he is witneſs to the diſorders of the women. Minerva comforts him and caſts him aſleep. At his awaking he deſires a favourable ſign from Jupiter, which is granted The feaſt of Apollo is celebrated by the people, and the ſuitors banquet in the palace. Telemachus exerts his authority amongſt them, notwithſtanding which, Ulyſſes is inſulted by Cteſippus, and the reſt continue in their exceſſes. Strange prodigies, are ſeen by Theoclymenus the augur, who explains them to the deſtruction of the woers.

AN ample hide divine Ulyſſes ſpread,
And form'd of fleecy ſkins his humble bed:
(The remnants of the ſpoil the ſuiter-crowd
In feſtival devour'd, and victims vow'd.)
Then o'er the chief, Eurynome the chaſte
With duteous care a downy carpet caſt:
With dire revenge his thoughtful boſom glows,
And ruminating wrath, he ſcorns repoſe.
As thus pavilion'd in the porch he lay,
Scenes of lewd loves his wakeful eyes ſurvey,
Whilſt to nocturnal joys impure, repair
With wanton glee, the proſtituted fair.

v. 12. *With wanton glee, the proſtituted fair.*] Euſtathius expatiates upon the conduct of theſe female ſervants of Penelope. Silence and a decent reſerve (remarks that author) is the ornament of the fair ſex; levity and laughter betray them into an unguarded

His heart with rage this new diſhonour ſtung,
Wav'ring his thoughts in dubious balance hung

behaviour, and make them ſuſceptible of wanton impreſſions. The Athenians, as Pauſanias informs us, had a temple ſacred to love and Venus the whiſperer. Venus was called the whiſperer (ἐπιθυρίδιος) becauſe they who there offered up their prayers, applied their mouths to the ear of the ſtatue of that goddeſs, and whiſpered their petitions; an intimation, that women ought to govern their tongue, and not let it tranſgreſs either by loudneſs or loquacity. But this no ways effects the ladies of Great-Britain; they ſpeak ſo well, they ſhould never be ſilent.

Ulyſſes, Homer tells us, is almoſt provoked to kill theſe females with his own hands: this has been imagined a thought unworthy an hero. The like objection has been made againſt Æneas in Virgil (Æneid, lib. ii. v. 567.)

Thus, wand'ring in my way, without a guide,
The graceleſs Helen in the porch I 'ſpy'd
Of Veſta's temple: there ſhe lurk'd alone,
Muſing ſhe ſat, and what ſhe could, unknown;
Trembling with rage, the ſtrumpet I regard,
Reſolv'd to give her guilt the due reward.

This whole paſſage is ſaid to have been expunged from Virgil by Tucca and Varius; for as Virgil there expreſſes it,

'Tis true a ſoldier can ſmall honour gain,
And boaſt no conqueſt from a woman ſlain. Dryden.

But the objection is probably made with too great ſeverity, both againſt Homer and Virgil: it is no diſgrace to the beſt or bravest man, to be ſubject to ſuch paſſions as betray him into no unworthy actions: a hero is not ſuppoſed to be inſenſible; he diſtinguiſhes himſelf as ſuch, if he reſtrains them within the bounds of reaſon. Both Æneas and Ulyſſes are fired with a juſt indignation; and this is agreeable to human nature; but both of them proceed to no outrageous action, and this ſhews that their paſſions are governed by ſuperiour reaſon. However this reſentment of Ulyſſes is leſs liable to objection than that of Æneas: Ulyſſes ſubdues his indignation by the reflection of his own reaſon; but Virgil introduces a machine to compoſe the ſpirit of Æneas:

—— —— all ſhining heav'nly bright,
My mother ſtood reveal'd before my ſight,
She held my hand, the deſtin'd blow to break, &c.

It may be further added that the caſe is very different between Æneas and Ulyſſes. The perſons whom Ulyſſes intends to puniſh are his ſubjects and ſervants, and ſuch a puniſhment would be no

Or, inſtant ſhould he quench the guilty flame
With their own blood, and intercept the ſhame;
Or to their luſt indulge a laſt embrace,
And let the peers conſummate the diſgrace;
Round his ſwoll'n heart the murm'rous fury rolls;
As o'er her young the mother-maſtiff growls,
And bays the ſtranger-groom: ſo wrath compreſt
Recoiling, mutter'd thunder in his breaſt.
Poor ſuff'ring heart! he cry'd, ſupport the pain
Of wounded honour, and thy rage reſtrain.

more than an act of juſtice as he is their maſter and king; and we find in the ſequel of the Odyſſey that he actually inflicts it. It ſhould therefore be thought an inſtance of Homer's judgment, in painting the diſorders of theſe ſervants in ſuch ſtrong colours, that we may acknowledge the juſtice, when he afterwards brings them to puniſhment.

v. 20. *As o'er her young the mother-maſtiff growls*, &c.] This in the original is a very bold expreſſion, but Homer, to ſoften it, inſtances a compariſon which reconciles us to it. Ennius has literally tranſlated it, as Spondanus obſerves:

——— animuſque in pectore latrat."

That is, word for word,

——— Κραδίη δέ οἱ ἔνδον ὑλάκτει.

The ſimilitude itſelf is very expreſſive; as the maſtiff barks to guard her young, ſo labours the ſoul of Ulyſſes in defence of his ſon and wife, Penelope and Telemachus. Dacier was afraid that the compariſon could not be rendered with any beauty in the French tongue, and therefore has ſubſtituted another in the room of it, "Son cœur rugiſſoit au dedans de luy, comme un lion rugit "autour d'une bergerie, où il ne ſçauroit entrer." But however more noble the lion may be than the maſtiff, it is evident that, ſhe utterly deviates from the alluſion: the maſtiff rages in defence of her young, Ulyſſes of his ſon Telemachus; but how is this repreſented by a lion roaring round a fold, which he is not to defend, but deſtroy? We have therefore choſen to follow Homer in the more humble but more expreſſive ſimilitude; and what will entirely reconcile us to it, is the great honour which was paid to dogs by the antients: they were kept as a piece of ſtate by princes or heroes, and therefore a compariſon drawn from them was held to be as noble as if it had been drawn from a lion.

v. 23. *Poor ſuff'ring heart! he cry'd, ſupport the pain*
Of wounded honour, and thy rage reſtrain.]

Not fiercer woes thy fortitude cou'd foil,
When the brave partners of thy ten years toil
Dire Polypheme devour'd: I then was freed
By patient prudence, from the death decreed.
Thus anchor'd safe on reason's peaceful coast,
Tempests of wrath his soul no longer tost;
Restless his body rolls, to rage resign'd:
As one who long with pale-ey'd famine pin'd,

These two verses are quoted by Plato in his Phædo, where he treats of the soul's immortality: he makes use of them to prove that Homer understood the soul to be uncompounded and distinct from the body. "If the soul, argues that author, were a compounded "substance, if it were harmony, (as some philosophically assert) "she would never act discordantly from the parts which compose "it; but we see the contrary, we see the soul guide and govern "the parts of which she herself is pretended to be composed; she "resists, threatens and restrains our passions, our fears, avarice "and anger: in short, the soul speaks to the body as to a sub-"stance of a nature entirely different from its own. Homer "therefore evidently understood that the soul ought to govern and "direct the passions, and that it is of a nature more divine than "harmony."

This is undoubtedly very just reasoning; and there is an expression, observes Dacier, that bears the same import in the holy scriptures: "The heart of David smote him when he numbered "the people." There is this difference; in Homer by "heart" is understood the corporeal substance, in the scriptures the spiritual; but both make a manifest distinction between the soul and the body.

v. 32. *As one who long*, &c.] No passage in the whole Odyssey has fallen under more ridicule than this comparison; Monsieur Perrault is particularly severe upon it: Homer (says that critic) compares Ulysses turning in his bed to a black-pudding broiling on a gridiron; whereas the truth is, he compares that hero turning and tossing in his bed, burning with impatience to satisfy himself with the blood of the suitors, to a man in sharp hunger preparing the entrails of a victim over a great fire; and the agitation represents the agitation of Ulysses. Homer compares not the things, but the persons.

Boileau, in his notes upon Longinus, answers this objection. It is notorious that the belly of some animals was one of the most delicious dishes amongst the antients: that the "sumen" or sow's belly was boasted of for its excellence by the Romans, and forbidden by a sumptuary law as too voluptuous. Besides the Greek word used to express a black-pudding was not invented in the days of Homer. Ogilby indeed thus renders it:

The ſav'ry cates on glowing embers caſt
Inceſſant turns, impatient for repaſt;
Ulyſſes ſo, from ſide to ſide devolv'd,
In ſelf-debate the ſuitors doom reſolv'd.
When in the form of mortal nymph array'd,
From heav'n deſcends the Jove-born martial maid;
And hov'ring o'er his head in view confeſs'd,
The goddeſs thus her fav'rite care addreſs'd.
Oh thou, of mortals moſt inur'd to woes!
Why roll thoſe eyes unfriended of repoſe?
Beneath thy palace roof forget thy care;
Bleſt in thy queen! bleſt in thy blooming heir!
Whom, to the gods when ſuppliant fathers bow,
They name the ſtandard of their deareſt vow.

As one a pudding broiling on the coals.

But you will aſk, Is not the alluſion mean at beſt, and does it not convey a low image? Monſieur Dacier anſwers in the negative, in his notes upon Ariſtotle's Poetics. The compariſon is borrowed from ſacrifices which yielded blood and fat, and was therefore ſo far from being deſpicable, that it was looked upon with veneration by antiquity. Lib. i. of the Iliad.

On theſe, in double cawls involv'd with art,
The choiceſt morſels lay from every part.

The "cawls" and the "choiceſt morſels" were the fat of the victim, ſelected as the beſt part of it, to be offered to the gods. We may find that the thought was noble in the oriental language, for the author of Eccleſiaſticus makes uſe of it, xlvii. 2. "As is "the fat taken from the peace-offering, ſo was David choſen out "of the children of Iſrael." And the ſame alluſion which was uſed to repreſent the worth and excellence of David, could be no degradation to Ulyſſes.

But what is underſtood by the "belly of the beaſt, full of fat "and blood?" Boileau is of opinion that thoſe words denote the fat and the blood which are in thoſe parts of an animal naturally: but he is in an errour, as appears evidently from theſe lines, lib. xviii. of the Odyſſey.

Γαστέρες αἵ δ' αἰγῶν κέατ' ἐν πυρί· τὰς δ' ἐπὶ δόρπῳ
Κατθέμεθα, κνίσσης τε καὶ αἵματος ἐμπλήσαντες.

"Implentes ſanguine & pinguedine, in cœnâ deponamus;" a demonſtration that Homer intends not the natural fat and blood of the animal.

Juſt is thy kind reproach, (the chief rejoin'd)
Deeds full of fate diſtract my various mind,
In contemplation wrapp'd. This hoſtile crew
What ſingle arm hath proweſs to ſubdue?
Or if by Jove's, and thy auxiliar aid,
They're doom'd to bleed; O ſay, celeſtial maid:
Where ſhall Ulyſſes ſhun, or how ſuſtain,
Nations embattled to revenge the ſlain?
Oh impotence of faith! Minerva cries,
If man on frail unknowing man relies,
Doubt you the gods? Lo Pallas' ſelf deſcends,
Inſpires thy counſels, and thy toils attends.
In me affianc'd, fortify thy breaſt,
Tho' myriads leagu'd thy rightful claim conteſt:
My ſure divinity ſhall bear the ſhield,
And edge thy ſword to reap the glorious field.

v. 56. *If man on frail unknowing man relies,*
Doubt you the gods? ——]

There is excellent reaſoning in this, if a friend whom we know to be wiſe and powerful, adviſes us, we are ready to follow his inſtructions; the Divine Being gives us his counſel, and we refuſe it. Monſieur Dacier obſerves that Epictetus had this paſſage in his view, and beautified his morality with it. "The protection of a prince or potentate (ſays that author) gives us full "tranquillity, and baniſhes from us all uneaſy apprehenſion. We "have an all-powerful Being for our protector, and for our father; and yet the knowledge of it is not ſufficient to drive "away our fears, inquietudes, and diſcontents."

What Homer further puts into the mouth of the goddeſs of wiſdom is conſonant to ſacred verity, and agrees with the language of the ſcripture; Pſalm xxvii. 3. "Though an hoſt of men were "laid againſt me, yet ſhall not my heart be afraid."

The poet almoſt in every book mentions the deſtruction of the ſuitors by the ſingle hand of Ulyſſes, to reconcile us to it by degrees, that we may not be ſhocked at the great cataſtrophe of the poem as incredible: it is particularly judicious to inſiſt upon it in this place in a manner ſo ſolemn, to prepare us for the approaching event. If the deſtruction of the ſuitors ſhould appear humanly improbable by being aſcribed ſolely to Ulyſſes, it is at leaſt reconcileable to divine probability, and becomes credible through the intervention of a goddeſs.

Now, pay the debt to craving nature due,
Her faded pow'rs with balmy reſt renew.
She ceas'd: ambroſial ſlumbers ſeal his eyes;
His care diſſolves in viſionary joys:
The goddeſs pleas'd, regains her natal ſkies.
Not ſo the queen; the downy bands of ſleep
By grief relax'd, ſhe wak'd again to weep:
A gloomy pauſe enſu'd of dumb deſpair;
Then thus her fate invok'd, with fervent pray'r.
Diana! ſpeed thy deathful ebon-dart,
And cure the pangs of this convulſive heart.
Snatch me, ye whirlwinds! far from human race,
Toſt thro' the void illimitable ſpace:
Or if diſmounted from the rapid cloud,
Me with his whelming wave let ocean ſhroud!
So, Pandarus, thy hopes, three orphan-fair
Were doom'd to wander thro' the devious air;
Thyſelf untimely and thy conſort dy'd,
But four celeſtials both your cares ſupply'd.

v. 72. *Diana! ſpeed thy deathful ebon-dart*, &c.] I doubt not but the reader will be pleaſed with the beauty of this ſoliloquy. There is an aſſemblage of tender images and moving complaints, and yet they are ſuch as betray no meanneſs of ſpirit: the lamentation of Penelope is the lamentation of a queen and heroine; ſhe mourns, but it is with dignity. The poet makes a good uſe of her ſorrows, and they excellently ſuſtain her character of perſevering to elude the addreſſes of the ſuitors, when ſhe wiſhes even to die rather than to yield to them.

But I confeſs the inſerting ſo many particularities of the daughters of Pandarus, &c. greatly leſſens the pathetic of this ſpeech.

v. 74. *Snatch me, ye whirlwinds!* &c.] The antients (cier) were perſuaded that ſome perſons were carried away by ſtorms and whirlwinds. I would rather imagine ſuch expreſſions to be entirely figurative and poetical; it is probable that what gave occaſion to theſe fictions might be no more than the ſudden deaths of ſome perſons, and their diſappearance was aſcribed, in the language of poetry, to ſtorms and whirlwinds. The orientals delighted in ſuch bold figures. Job xxvii. 21. "The eaſt wind "carrieth him away, and as a ſtorm hurleth him out of his "place." And Iſaiah xli. 16. "The wind ſhall carry them "away, and the whirlwind ſhall ſcatter them."

Venus in tender delicacy rears
With honey, milk, and wine, their infant years:
Imperial Juno to their youth aſſign'd
A form majeſtic, and ſagacious mind:
With ſhapely growth Diana grac'd the bloom;
And Pallas taught the texture of the loom,
But whilſt to learn their lots in nuptial love,
Bright Cytherea ſought the bow'r of Jove;
(The god ſupreme, to whoſe eternal eye
The regiſters of fate expanded lie)
Wing'd harpies ſnatch'd th' unguarded charge away,
And to the Furies bore a grateful prey.

v. 82. *Venus in tender delicacy rears*
With honey, milk, and wine, their infant years.

Monſieur Dacier obſerves upon this paſſage; Venus is ſaid to feed theſe infants with wine, milk, and honey; that is, ſhe nurſed them in their infancy, with plenty and abundance. For this is the import of the expreſſion: a land flowing with milk and honey means a land of the greateſt fertility, as is evident from the writings of Moſes. So the prophet. "Butter and honey ſhall he "eat, till he knows how to refuſe the evil and chuſe the good;" that is, till the age of diſcretion.

v. 84. *Imperial Juno to their youth aſſign'd*
A form majeſtic, and ſagacious mind.]

It may ſeem that Homer aſcribes improper gifts to this goddeſs; wiſdom is the portion of Minerva, beauty of Venus, why then are they here aſcribed to Juno? Spondanus calls this an inſolvable difficulty. Dacier explains it by ſaying, that the beauty of princeſſes is different from that of perſons of an inferiour ſtation, their beauty conſiſts in a majeſty that is every way great and noble, and ſtrikes with awe, very different from the little affectations and formal ſoftneſſes of inferiour beauty; the former kind is the gift of Venus to the lower part of the fair ſex, the latter is beſtowed on princeſſes and queens, by Juno the regent of the ſkies.

v. 92. *Wing'd harpies ſnatch'd th' unguarded charge away.*] It is not evident what is meant by theſe princeſſes being carried away by the harpies: Euſtathius thinks that they wandered from their own country, and fell into the power of cruel governeſſes, whoſe ſeverities the poet aſcribes to the ἐρίνυες, or Furies. Dacier imagines, that theſe two princeſſes having ſeen the unhappy fate of their ſiſter Aëdon (who was married to Zethus, and ſlew her own ſon) feared a like calamity, and dreading marriage, retired to

Be ſuch my lot! Or thou Diana ſpeed
Thy ſhaft, and ſend me joyful to the dead:
To ſeek my lord among the warriour-train,
Ere ſecond vows my bridal faith profane.
When woes the waking ſenſe alone aſſail;
Whilſt night extends her ſoft oblivious veil,
Of other wretches care the torture ends:
No truce the warfare of my heart ſuſpends!
The night renews the day-diſtracting theme,
And airy terrours ſable ev'ry dream.
The laſt alone a kind illuſion wrought,
And to my bed my lov'd Ulyſſes brought,
In manly bloom, and each majeſtic grace,
As when for Troy he left my fond embrace;
Such raptures in my beating boſom riſe,
I deem it ſure a viſion of the ſkies.

Thus, whilſt Aurora mounts her purple throne,
In audible laments ſhe breathes her moan;

ſome diſtant ſolitude, where never being heard of, it gave room for the fiction. It muſt be allowed that the thought excellently agrees with the wiſhes of Penelope: theſe princeſſes were taken away at the point of their marriage; Penelope believes herſelf to be in the ſame condition, and wiſhes to be loſt rather than ſubmit to ſecond nuptials. This ſpeech has a further effect; we find Penelope reduced to the utmoſt exigency, ſhe has no further ſubterfuge; the poet therefore judiciouſly paints this exigency in the ſtrongeſt colours, to ſhew the neceſſity of unravelling the intrigue of the poem in the concluſion of the Odyſſey.

v. 107. *As when for Troy he left my fond embrace.*] This little circumſtance is not without a good effect: it ſhews that the whole ſoul of Penelope was poſſeſſed with the image of Ulyſſes. Homer adds, "ſuch as he was when he ſailed to Troy;" which is inſerted to take off our wonder that ſhe ſhould not diſcover him; this Ulyſſes in diſguiſe is not like the Ulyſſes ſhe formerly knew, and now delineates in her imagination. Euſtathius.

v. 110. *Thus, whilſt Aurora mounts her purple throne.*] This is the morning of the fortieth day; for part of the eighteenth book, and the whole nineteenth, and ſo far of the twentieth book, contain no more time than the evening of the thirty-ninth day.

The ſounds aſſault Ulyſſes' wakeful ear;
Miſ-judging of the cauſe, a ſudden fear
Of his arrival known, the chief alarms;
He thinks the queen is ruſhing to his arms.
Up-ſpringing from his couch, with active haſte
The fleece and carpet in the dome he plac'd;
(The hide, without, imbib'd the morning air)
And thus the gods invok'd, with ardent pray'r.

Jove, and ethereal thrones! with heav'n to friend
If the long ſeries of my woes ſhall end;
Of human race now riſing from repoſe,
Let one a bliſsful omen here diſcloſe:

v. 113. ——— *a ſudden fear*
Of his arrival known, the chief alarms.]

I was at a loſs for an explication of this line, till I found it in Euſtathius; for why ſhould Ulyſſes imagine that Penelope knew him to be Ulyſſes, after a ſpeech that expreſſed ſo much concern for his abſence? Ulyſſes having only heard the voice, not diſtinguiſhed the words of her lamentation, miſtakes the tears of Penelope for tears of joy; he ſuſpects that the diſcovery is made by Euryclea or Telemachus; that they have told her the truth to give her comfort; and fears leſt in the tranſport of her joy ſhe ſhould act ſomething that would betray him to the ſuitors, and prevent his deſigns: he therefore immediately withdraws, and makes a prayer to heaven for a ſign to re-aſſure his hopes, that he may proceed with confidence to their deſtruction.

v. 120. *Jove, and ethereal thrones* ———
123. ——— *a bliſsful omen* ———]

The conſtruction in the Greek is ungrammatical, for after Ζεῦ πατερ in the ſingular, the poet immediately adds εἰ μ' ἐθελοῦσες in the plural number; τὰ λοιπὰ δαιμόνια are implied ſays Euſtathius, ſo that θεοὶ is underſtood, which rectifies the conſtruction.

The reader will fully underſtand the import of this prayer, from the nature of omens, and the notions of them amongſt the antients: "If, ſays Ulyſſes, my prayer is heard, let there be a "voice from within the palace to certify me of it;" and immediately a voice is heard, "O Jupiter, may this day be the laſt to "the ſuitors!" Such ſpeeches as fell accidentally from any perſon were held ominous, and one of the antient ways of divination; Ulyſſes underſtands it as ſuch, and accepts the omen. It was in

And to confirm my faith, propitious Jove!
Vouchſafe the ſanction of a ſign above.
Whilſt lowly thus the chief adoring bows,
The pitying god his guardian aid avows.
Loud from a ſapphire ſky his thunder ſounds:
With ſpringing hope the hero's heart rebounds.
Soon, with conſummate joy to crown his pray'r,
An omen'd voice invades his raviſh'd ear.

uſe among the Romans, as appears from Tully of divination, when P. Æmilius was going to war with Perſeus king of the Macedonians, he found his little daughter in tears: "O father, "ſays ſhe, Perſeus is dead!" meaning her little dog named Perſeus; Æmilius immediately replied, "O daughter, I embrace "the omen," applying it to Perſeus king of the Macedonians; who was afterwards conquered by him, and died a captive in Rome. The ſame practice was uſed by the Hebrews, it was called Bath Kol; this is an inſtance of it: two rabbies deſiring to ſee Samuel a Babyloniſh doctor, "let us follow, ſaid they, the "hearing of Bath Kol;" travelling therefore near a ſchool, they heard a boy reading theſe words out of 1 Sam. xxv. 1. "And Sa-"muel died." They obſerved it, and found that their friend was dead. The Sortes Virgilianæ afterwards were much of this kind.

v. 128. *Loud from a ſapphire ſky*———] It was this circumſtance, of thunder burſting from a "ſerene ſky," that made it ominous: it was noted as ſuch amongſt the Romans in the books of the augurs; and Horace brings it as a proof againſt the opinions of Epicurus,

"———— Dieſpiter
"Igni corruſco nubila dividens,
"Plerumque per purum tonantes
"Egit equos, volucremque currum."

Virgil likewiſe ſpeaks of thunder as ominous: when Anchiſes ſaw the lambent flame round the head of Iulus, he prays to Jupiter, and immediately it thunders.

"Vix ea fatus erat ſenior, ſubitoque fragore
"Intonuit."

The Stoics drew an argument from thunder from a ſerene air, againſt the doctrines of Epicurus, who taught that the gods had no regard of human affairs; for they concluded ſuch thunder to be præter-natural, and an argument of a divine providence.

Beneath a pile that cloſe the dome adjoin'd,
Twelve female ſlaves the gift of Ceres grind;
Taſk'd for the royal board to bolt the bran
From the pure flour (the growth and ſtrength of man)
Diſcharging to the day the labour due,
Now early to repoſe the reſt withdrew;
One maid, unequal to the taſk aſſign'd,
Still turn'd the toilſome mill with anxious mind;
And thus in bitterneſs of ſoul divin'd.

Father of gods and men; whoſe thunders roll
O'er the cerulean vault, and ſhake the pole;
Whoe'er from heav'n has gain'd this rare oſtent,
(Of granted vows a certain ſignal ſent)
In this bleſt moment of accepted pray'r
Piteous, regard a wretch conſum'd with care!
Inſtant, O Jove! confound the ſuitor-train,
For whom o'er-toil'd I grind the golden grain:
Far from this dome the lewd devourers caſt,
And be this feſtival decreed their laſt!

Big with their doom denounc'd in earth and ſky,
Ulyſſes' heart dilates with ſecret joy.
Meantime the menial train with unctuous wood
Heap'd high the genial hearth, Vulcanian food:
When, early dreſs'd, advanc'd the royal heir;
With manly graſp he wav'd a martial ſpear,
A radiant ſabre grac'd his purple zone,
And on his foot the golden ſandal ſhone.

v. 133. *Twelve female ſlaves the gift of Ceres grind.*] This little particularity ſhews us the great profuſion of the ſuitors, who employed twelve mills to find them bread. There is a particular energy in the word ἐπερρώοντο; it denotes the great labour and aſſiduity of theſe people in preparing the bread, and conſequently the great waſte of the ſuitors. It likewiſe preſerves a piece of antiquity, that kings formerly had mills in their palaces to provide for their families, and that theſe mills were attended by women; I ſuppoſe becauſe preparing bread was an houſhold care, and therefore fell to the lot of female ſervants.

His ſteps impetuous to the portal preſs'd;
And Eurycléa thus he there addreſs'd.
Say thou, to whom my youth its nurture owes,
Was care for due refection, and repoſe,
Beſtow'd the ſtranger gueſt? Or waits he griev'd,
His age not honour'd, nor his wants reliev'd?
Promiſcuous grace on all the queen confers;
(In woes bewilder'd oft' the wiſeſt errs.)
The wordy vagrant to the dole aſpires,
And modeſt worth with noble ſcorn retires.
She thus: O ceaſe that ever honour'd name
To blemiſh now; it ill deſerves your blame:
A bowl of gen'rous wine ſuffic'd the gueſt;
In vain the queen the night-refection preſt;
Nor would he court repoſe in downy ſtate,
Unbleſs'd, abandon'd to the rage of fate!
A hide beneath the portico was ſpread,
And fleecy ſkins compos'd an humble bed:
A downy carpet caſt with duteous care,
Secur'd him from the keen nocturnal air.
His cornel jav'lin pois'd, with regal port,
To the ſage Greeks conven'd in Themis' court,

v. 165. *Promiſcuous grace on all the queen confers.*] This ſpeech of Telemachus may ſeem to be wanting in filial reſpect, as it appears to condemn the conduct of his mother: but (remarks Euſtathius) the contrary is to be gathered from it. His blame is really a commendation; it ſhews that her affection was ſo great for Ulyſſes, that ſhe received every vagrant honourably, who deceived her with falſe news about him; and that other perſons who brought no tidings of him, though men of great worth, were leſs acceptable.

v. 180. *To the ſage Greeks conven'd in Themis' court,*
Forth-iſſuing from the dome the prince repair'd.]

It was cuſtomary for kings and magiſtrates to go early every morning into the public aſſemblies, to diſtribute juſtice, and take care of public affairs: but this aſſembly contributing nothing to the action of the Odyſſey, the poet paſſes it over in a curſory manner, without any enlargement. Euſtathius.

Forth-iſſuing from the dome the prince repair'd :
Two dogs of chace, a lion-hearted guard,
Behind him ſourly ſtalk'd. Without delay
The dame divides the labour of the day ;
Thus urging to the toil the menial train.
What marks of luxury the marble ſtain!
Its wonted luſtre let the floor regain ;
The ſeats with purple clothe in order due ;
And let th' abſterſive ſponge the board renew :
Let ſome refreſh the vaſe's ſullied mold ;
Some bid the goblets boaſt their native gold :
Some to the ſpring, with each a jar, repair,
And copious waters pure for bathing bear :
Diſpatch ! for ſoon the ſuitors will aſſay
The lunar feaſt-rites to the god of day.

v. 189. *And let th' abſterſive ſponge the board renew.*] The table was not antiently covered with linen, but carefully cleanſed with wet ſponges. Thus Arrian, ἆρον τὰς τραπέζας, σπόγγισον: And Martial :

" Hæc tibi ſorte datur tergendis ſpongia menſis."

They made uſe of no napkins to wipe their hands, but the ſoft and fine part of the bread, which they called ἀπομαγδαλίαι, which afterwards they threw to the dogs ; this cuſtom is mentioned in the Odyſſey, lib. x.

Ὡς δ' ὅταν ἀμφὶ ἄνακτα κύνες δαίτηθεν ἴοντα.
Σαίνωσ', αἰεὶ γάρ τε φέρει μειλίγματα θυμῷ.

As from ſome feaſt a man returning late,
His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,
Rejoicing round, ſome morſel to receive,
Such as the good man ever wont to give.

The morſel in the tranſlation, and the μειλίγματα in the Greek, mean theſe pieces of bread, or ἀπομαγδαλίαι, with which the antients wiped their hands after eating, and then threw to the dogs.

v 195. *The lunar feaſt-rites to the god of day.*] This was the laſt day of one month, and the firſt of the following: the Greek months were lunar, the firſt day of every month was a day of great ſolemnity, and it was conſecrated to Apollo, the author and fountain of light. Ulyſſes had ſaid, lib. xiv. v. 186.

She ſaid; with duteous haſte a bevy fair
Of twenty virgins to the ſpring repair:
With varied toils the reſt adorn the dome.
Magnificent, and blithe, the ſuitors come.
Some weild the ſounding ax; the dodder'd oaks
Divide, obedient to the forceful ſtrokes.
Soon from the fount, with each a brimming urn,
(Eumæus in their train) the maids return.
Three porkers for the feaſt, all brawny-chin'd,
He brought; the choiceſt of the tuſky kind:
In lodgments firſt ſecure his care he view'd,
Then to the king this friendly ſpeech renew'd:
Now ſay ſincere, my gueſt! the ſuitor-train
Still treat they worth with lordly dull diſdain;
Or ſpeaks their deed a bounteous mind humane?
Some pitying god (Ulyſſes ſad reply'd)
With vollied vengeance blaſt their tow'ring pride!
No conſcious bluſh, no ſenſe of right reſtrains
The tides of luſt that ſwell their boiling veins;
From vice to vice their appetites are toſt,
All cheaply fated at another's coſt!
While thus the chief his woes indignant told,
Melanthius, maſter of the bearded fold,
The goodlieſt goats of all the royal herd
Spontaneous to the ſuitors feaſt preferr'd:
Two grooms aſſiſtant bore the victims bound;
With quav'ring cries the vaulted roofs reſound:

Ere the next moon increaſe, or this decay,
His antient realms Ulyſſes ſhall ſurvey;
In blood and duſt each proud oppreſſor mourn.

Τοῦ μὲν φθίνοντος μηνὸς, τῷ δ' ἰσαμένοιο.

This, ſays Solon in Plutarch, means that Ulyſſes ſhall return on the laſt day of the month preciſely; and here we find it verified. Ulyſſes diſcovers himſelf upon this day, and kills the ſuitors: by his return, in the foregoing period, is meant his diſcovery; for he was returned when he made that aſſertion to Eumæus. It is therefore probable that the above recited verſe was rightly interpreted by Solon.

And to the chief auſtere, aloud began
The wretch untriendly to the race of man.
Here, vagrant, ſtill? offenſive to my lords!
Blows have more energy than airy words;
Theſe arguments I'll uſe: nor conſcious ſhame,
Nor threats, thy bold intruſion will reclaim.
On this high feaſt the meaneſt vulgar boaſt
A plenteous board! Hence! ſeek another hoſt!
Rejoinder to the churl the king diſdain'd,
But ſhook his head, and riſing wrath reſtrain'd.
From Cephalenia croſs the ſurgy main
Philæ̆us late arriv'd, a faithful ſwain.
A ſteer ungrateful to the bull's embrace,
And goats he brought, the pride of all their race;
Imported in a ſhallop not his own:
The dome re-echo'd to their mingled moan.
Straight to the guardian of the briſtly kind
He thus began, benevolent of mind.
What gueſt is he, of ſuch majeſtic air?
His lineage and paternal clime declare:
Dim thro' th' eclipſe of fate, the rays divine
Of ſov'reign ſtate with faded ſplendour ſhine.
If monarchs by the gods are plung'd in woe,
To what abyſs are we foredoom'd to go!
Then affable he thus the chief addreſs'd,
Whilſt with pathetic warmth his hand he preſs'd.

v. 237. *Imported in a ſhallop* ——] To underſtand this paſſage, it is neceſſary to remember that Melanthius and Philætius fed their flocks and herds in Cephalenia, an adjacent iſland, under the dominion of Ulyſſes; but living in different parts of it, they are brought over in ſeparate veſſels, by different ferrymen, περήμενες, as Homer expreſſes it.

v. 245. *If monarchs by the gods*, &c.] This is the reaſoning of Philætius: kings are in a peculiar manner the care of the gods; and if the gods exempt not kings from calamities, how can inferiour perſons (ſays Dacier) expect to be exempted, or complain in the day of adverſity? But I perſuade myſelf the words have a deeper ſenſe, and mean Ulyſſes; "Well may vagrants ſuffer, "when kings, ſuch as Ulyſſes, are not free from afflictions."

Stranger! may fate a milder aſpect ſhew,
And ſpin thy future with a whiter clue!
O Jove! for ever deaf to human cries;
The tyrant, not the father of the ſkies!
Unpiteous of the race thy will began!
The fool of fate thy manufacture, man,
With penury, contempt, repulſe, and care,
The galling load of life is doom'd to bear.
Ulyſſes from his ſtate a wand'rer ſtill,
Upbraids thy pow'r, thy wiſdom, or thy will:
O monarch ever dear!—O man of woe!—
Freſh flow my tears, and ſhall for ever flow!

v. 251. *O Jove! for ever deaf to human cries;*
The tyrant, not the father of the ſkies!]

Theſe words are to be aſcribed to the exceſs of ſorrow which Philætius feels for the ſufferings of Ulyſſes; for they certainly tranſgreſs the bounds of reaſon. But if we conſider the ſtate of theology in Homer's time, the ſentence will appear leſs offenſive; "How can Jupiter (ſays Philætius) who is our father, throw "his children into ſuch an abyſs of miſery? Thou, oh Jove, haſt "made us, yet haſt no compaſſion when we ſuffer." It is no eaſy matter to anſwer this argument from the heathen theology, and no wonder therefore if it confounds the reaſon of Philætius; but we who have certain hopes of a future ſtate, can readily ſolve the difficulty: that ſtate will be a time of retribution; it will amply recompenſe the good man for all his calamities, or as Milton expreſſes,

Will juſtify the ways of God to men.

It may be obſerved in general, that this introduction of Philætius and his ſpeech, ſo warm in the cauſe of Ulyſſes, is inſerted here with admirable judgment: the poet intends to make uſe of his aſſiſtance in the deſtruction of the ſuitors; he therefore brings him in giving Ulyſſes full aſſurance of his fidelity; ſo that when that hero reveals himſelf to him, he does not depart from his cautious character, being before certified of his honeſty.

I will only add, that Philætius is not to be looked upon as a common ſervant, but as an officer of ſtate and dignity; and whatever has been ſaid in thoſe annotations concerning Eumæus may be applied to Philætius; he is here called ὀρχάμος ἀνδρῶν, a title of honour, and Ulyſſes promiſes to marry him into his own family in the ſequel of the Odyſſey; conſequently he is a perſonage worthy to be an actor in epic poetry.

v. 260. *Freſh flow my tears, and ſhall for ever flow!*] The words

Like thee, poor ſtranger gueſt, deny'd his home!
Like thee, in rags obſcene decreed to roam!
Or haply periſh'd on ſome diſtant coaſt,
In Stygian gloom he glides a penſive ghoſt!
O, grateful for the good his bounty gave,
I'll grieve, 'till ſorrow ſink me to the grave!
His kind protecting hand my youth preferr'd,
The regent of his Cephalenian herd:
With vaſt increaſe beneath my care it ſpreads,
A ſtately breed! and blackens far the meads.
Conſtrain'd, the choiceſt beeves I thence import,
To cram theſe cormorants that crowd his court:
Who in partition ſeek his realm to ſhare;
Nor human right, nor wrath divine revere.
Since here reſolv'd oppreſſive theſe reſide,
Contending doubts my anxious heart divide:
Now to ſome foreign clime inclin'd to fly,
And with the royal herd protection buy:
Then happier thoughts return the nodding ſcale,
Light mounts deſpair, alternate hopes prevail:

in the original are ἴδιον ὡς ἐνόησα, and they are very differently explained by Dacier and Euſtathius. "Ἴδιον, τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἴδρωσα, ἠγωνίασα, "I have ſweated and been in an agony at the thought of the "ſevere diſpenſations of Jupiter;" this is the interpretatation of Euſtathius. Dacier takes ἴδιον to be an adjective, and then it muſt be connected with the preceding period.

Οὐκ ἐλεαίρεις ἄνδρας, ἐπὴν δὴ γείνεαι αὐτὸς,
Μισγέμεναι κακότητι, καὶ ἄλγεσι λευγαλέοισι,
Ἴδιον ὡς ἐνόησα.

"Ut privatim, vel domeſtico admonitus ſum exemplo," for ſo we may render ἴδιον, meaning Ulyſſes; then the ſenſe will be this: "Jupiter, though thou haſt made us, thou haſt no compaſſion "upon mankind, thou caſteſt us into evils and miſery; as I have "learned by a private or domeſtic inſtance, namely in the perſon "of Ulyſſes." If my judgment were of any weight, I ſhould recommend this interpretation rather than that of Euſtathius, which ſeems to be a forced one, and I remember no inſtance of this nature in Homer; but the preference is ſubmitted to the reader's deciſion.

In op'ning proſpects of ideal joy,
My king returns; the proud uſurpers die.
To whom the chief: in thy capacious mind
Since daring zeal with cool debate is join'd;
Attend a deed already ripe in fate:
Atteſt, oh Jove! the truth I now relate!
This ſacred truth atteſt each genial pow'r,
Who bleſs the board, and guard this friendly bow'r!
Before thou quit the dome (nor long delay)
Thy wiſh produc'd in act, with pleas'd ſurvey,
Thy wond'ring eyes ſhall view: his rightful reign
By arms avow'd Ulyſſes ſhall regain,
And to the ſhades devote the ſuitor-train.
O Jove ſupreme, the raptur'd ſwain replies,
With deeds conſummate ſoon the promis'd joys!
Theſe aged nerves, with new-born vigour ſtrung,
In that bleſt cauſe ſhou'd emulate the young—
Aſſents Eumæus to the pray'r addreſt;
And equal ardours fire his loyal breaſt.
Meantime the ſuitors urge the prince's fate,
And deathful arts employ the dire debate:
When in his airy tour, the bird of Jove
Truſs'd with his ſinewy pounce a trembling dove;
Siniſter to their hope! This omen ey'd
Amphinomus, who thus preſaging cry'd.
The gods from force and fraud the prince defend;
O peers! the ſanguinary ſcheme ſuſpend:
Your future thought let fable fate employ;
And give the preſent hour to genial joy.

v. 305. *Amphinomus, who thus preſaging cry'd.*] It may be aſked why Amphinomus gives this interpretation to the prodigy? and why might not the eagle denote the ſuitors, and the pigeon Telemachus? No doubt but ſuch an interpretation would have been ſpecious, but contrary to the rules of augury. The eagle is the king of birds, and muſt therefore of neceſſity denote the chief perſonage, and could only be applied to Ulyſſes, or Telemachus. Amphinomus thus interprets it, and the ſuitors acquieſce in this interpretation.

From council ſtraight th' aſſenting peerage ceas'd,
And in the dome prepar'd the genial feaſt.
Diſ-rob'd, their veſts apart in order lay,
Then all with ſpeed ſuccinct the victims ſlay:
With ſheep and ſhaggy goats the porkers bled,
And the proud ſteer was on the marble ſpread.
With fire prepar'd they deal the morſels round,
Wine roſy-bright the brimming goblets crown'd,
By ſage Eumæus borne: the purple tide
Melanthius from an ample jar ſupply'd:
High caniſters of bread Philætius plac'd;
And eager all devour the rich repaſt.
Diſpos'd apart, Ulyſſes ſhares the treat!
A trivet-table, and ignobler ſeat,

v. 311. *And in the dome prepar'd the genial feaſt.*] The antients, ſays Euſtathius, obſerve that this is the only place where the ſuitors offer any ſacrifice throughout the whole Odyſſey, and that there is no inſtance at all, that they make any prayer to the gods. But is it evident from this place, that this is a ſacrifice? It is true the ſacrificial term of ἱέρευον is mentioned; but perhaps that word may not denote a ſacrifice; for ἱερεῖα, though it primarily ſignifies the fleſh of animals offered to the gods, yet in a leſs proper acceptation implies the fleſh of all animals indifferently. Thus Athenæus, τροφὴν, τὴν τῶν νεοσσῶν ἱερείων, which muſt be rendered, "the fleſh of young animals." Thus lib. vii. εὐσηπότερα τὰ νυκτὸς θυόμενα ἱερεῖα," the fleſh of animals that are killed by "night ſooneſt putrifies;" and Galen uſes ζῷον, and ἱερεῖον, for an animal indiſcriminately. The reaſon is, becauſe originally no animal was ever ſlain but ſome part of it was offered to the gods, and in this ſenſe every ζῷον was ἱερεῖον. If we conſult the context in Homer, it muſt be allowed that there is no other word but ἱέρευον that diſtinguiſhes this from a common repaſt, through the whole deſcription; and if that word will bear a remote ſignification, as ἱερεῖον does, I ſhould conclude, that this is no ſacrifice. Nay, if it ſhould be found that ἱέρευον implies of neceſſity a religious act, yet it will not prove that this is more than a cuſtomary meal, ſince the antients at all entertainments made libations to the gods. What may ſeem to ſtrengthen this conjecture is, that the poet immediately adds, that the Greeks, Ἀχαιοὶ ſacrificed in the grove of Apollo; without mentioning that the ſuitors partook in the ſacrifice: nay they ſeem to be feaſting in the palace, while the Greeks are offering in the grove.

v. 323. *A trivet table, and ignobler ſeat.*] This circumſtance is

The prince appoints; but to his ſire aſſigns
The taſteful inwards, and nectareous wines.
Partake, my gueſt, he cry'd, without control
The ſocial feaſt, and drain the cheering bowl:
Dread not the railer's laugh, nor ruffian's rage;
No vulgar roof protects thy honour'd age;
This dome a refuge to thy wrongs ſhall be,
From my great ſire too ſoon devolv'd to me!
Your violence and ſcorn, ye ſuitors ceaſe,
Leſt arms avenge the violated peace.
Aw'd by the prince, ſo haughty, brave, and young,
Rage gnaw'd the lip, amazement chain'd the tongue.
Be patient, peers! at length Antinous cries;
The threats of vain imperious youth deſpiſe:
Wou'd Jove permit the meditated blow,
That ſtream of eloquence ſhou'd ceaſe to flow.
Without reply vouchſaf'd, Antinous ceas'd:
Meanwhile the pomp of feſtival increas'd:
By heralds rank'd, in marſhall'd order move
The city-tribes, to pleas'd Apollo's grove:
Beneath the verdure of which awful ſhade,
The lunar hecatomb they grateful laid;
Partook the ſacred feaſt, and ritual honours paid.
But the rich banquet in the dome prepar'd,
(An humble ſide-board ſet) Ulyſſes ſhar'd.
Obſervant of the prince's high beheſt,
His menial train attend the ſtranger-gueſt:
Whom Pallas with unpard'ning fury fir'd,
By lordly pride and keen reproach inſpir'd.
A Samian peer, more ſtudious than the reſt
Of vice, who teem'd with many a dead-born jeſt;
And urg'd, for title to a conſort queen,
Unnumber'd acres arable and green;

not inſerted unneceſſarily; the table is ſuitable to the diſguiſe of Ulyſſes, and it might have created a jealouſy in the ſuitors if Telemachus had uſed him with greater diſtinction.

(Cteſippus nam'd) this lord Ulyſſes ey'd,
And thus burſt out th' impoſthumate with pride.
The ſentence I propoſe, ye peers, attend:
Since due regard muſt wait the prince's friend,
Let each a token of eſteem beſtow:
This gift acquits the dear reſpect I owe;
With which he nobly may diſcharge his ſeat,
And pay the menials for the maſter's treat.
He ſaid; and of the ſteer before him plac'd,
That ſinewy fragment at Ulyſſes caſt,
Where to the paſtern-bone, by nerves combin'd,
The well-horn'd foot indiſſolubly join'd;
Which whizzing high, the wall unſeemly ſign'd.
The chief indignant grins a ghaſtly ſmile;
Revenge and ſcorn within his boſom boil:

v. 370. ——— *grins a ghaſtly ſmile.*] The expreſſion in Greek is remarkable:

——— μείδησε δὲ θυμῷ
Σαρδάνιον (or Σαρδόνιον.)

Some tell us that there is an herb frequent in the iſland of Sardinia, which by taſting diſtorts the muſcles, that a man ſeems to laugh while he is under a painful agony; and from thence the "Sardinian laugh" became a proverb, to ſignify a laugh which concealed an inward pain. Others refer the expreſſion to an antient cuſtom of the Sardinians (a colony of the Lacedæmonians;) it is pretended that upon a certain feſtival every year, they not only ſlew all their priſoners of war, but alſo all the old men that were above ſeventy, and obliged thoſe miſerable wretches to laugh while they underwent the ſeverity of torment. Either of theſe reaſons fully explains the meaning of the Σαρδόνιος γέλως, and ſhews it to denote an exteriour laugh, and an inward pain. I am inclined to prefer the former interpretation, not only as it appears moſt natural, but becauſe Virgil ſeems to underſtand it in that ſenſe, for he alludes to the above-mentioned quality of the Sardinian herbs, eclogue vii. v. 41.

"Immo ego Sardois videor tibi amarior herbis."
——— deform'd like him who chaws
Sardinian herbage to contract his jaws.

The reader may obſerve that Cteſippus breaks out into buffoonry, and the ſuitors frequently are guilty of it in other parts of the

When thus the prince with pious rage inflam'd:
Had not th' inglorious wound thy malice aim'd
Fall'n guiltleſs of the mark, my certain ſpear
Had made thee buy the brutal triumph dear:
Nor ſhou'd thy ſire, a queen his daughter boaſt;
The ſuitor, now, had vaniſh'd in a ghoſt:
No more, ye lew'd compeers, with lawleſs pow'r
Invade my dome, my herds and flocks devour:
For genuine worth, of age mature to know,
My grape ſhall redden, and my harveſt grow.
Or if each other's wrongs ye ſtill ſupport,
With rapes and riot to profane my court;
What ſingle arm with numbers can contend?
On me let all your liſted ſwords deſcend,
And with my life ſuch vile diſhonours end.
A long ceſſation of diſcourſe enſu'd,
By gentler Agelaus thus renew'd.
A juſt reproof, ye peers! your rage reſtrain
From the protected gueſt, and menial train:
And prince! to ſtop the ſource of future ill,
Aſſent yourſelf, and gain the royal will.
Whilſt hope prevail'd to ſee your ſire reſtor'd,
Of right the queen refus'd a ſecond lord.
But who ſo vain of faith, ſo blind to fate,
To think he ſtill ſurvives to claim the ſtate?
Now preſs the ſovereign dame with warm deſire
To wed, as wealth or worth her choice inſpire:
The lord ſelected to the nuptial joys,
Far hence will lead the long contended prize:

Odyſſey: theſe levities have been proſcribed by the critics as too low, and unworthy of epic poetry; but Homer adapts himſelf to his characters, he paints ridiculous men in ridiculous colours: though I will not ſay but ſuch characters are more proper for comedy than epic poetry. If ever they are pardonable, they are in Homer, who puts theſe low pleaſantries into the mouths of drunkards and debauchees; ſuch perſons being generally men of no worth or ſerious deportment.

Whilſt in paternal pomp, with plenty bleſt,
You reign, of this imperial dome poſſeſt.
Sage and ſerene Telemachus replies:
By him at whoſe beheſt the thunder flies!
And by the name on earth I moſt revere,
By great Ulyſſes, and his woes I ſwear
(Who never muſt review his dear domain;
Inroll'd, perhaps, in Pluto's dreary train,)
Where'er her choice the royal dame avows,
My bridal gifts ſhall load the future ſpouſe:
But from this dome my parent queen to chaſe!—
From me, ye gods! avert ſuch dire diſgrace.
But Pallas clouds with intellectual gloom
The ſuitors ſouls, inſenſate of their doom!
A mirthful phrenzy ſeiz'd the fated crowd;
The roofs reſound with cauſeleſs laughter loud:

v. 403. *Sage and ſerene Telemachus replies*, &c.] It is obſervable that Telemachus ſwears by the ſorrows of his father; an expreſſion, in my judgment, very noble, and at the ſame time, full of a filial tenderneſs. This was an ancient cuſtom amongſt the orientals, as appears from an oath not unlike it in Geneſis xxxi. 53. "And Jacob ſware by the fear of his father Iſaac."

But how is this ſpeech to be underſtood? for how can Telemachus perſuade his mother to marry, when he knows that Ulyſſes is returned? there is a concealed and an apparent meaning in the expreſſion. Telemachus, obſerves Euſtathius, ſwears that he will not hinder his mother from taking an huſband, but he means Ulyſſes: the words therefore are ambiguous, and the ambiguity deceives the ſuitors, who believe that by this oath Telemachus obliges himſelf not only not to hinder, but promote the intended nuptials.

v. 415. *A mirthful phrenzy ſeiz'd*, &c.] It is in the Greek, "They laughed with other men's cheeks." There are many explications of this paſſage: Euſtathius imagines it to denote a feigned and pretended laughter. Eraſmus explains it, "non libenter "neque ex animo ridere, ſed ita ridere quaſi non tuis, ſed alienis "maxillis rideas." But if we conſult the conduct of the ſuitors, a contrary interpretation will ſeem to be neceſſary: for this laughter of the ſuitors appears to be very real, and from the heart. Homer calls it, ἄσβεστον, "exceſſive, inextinguiſhed;" and again, ἡσθὺ γέλασσαν, or they laughed "with joy, ſuaviter riſerunt;" which expreſſions denote a real and unfeigned laughter. But how will the words be brought to bear this conſtruction? Very naturally;

Floating in gore, portentous to ſurvey!
In each diſcolour'd vaſe the viands lay:

they laughed as if they had borrowed their cheeks, as if their cheeks were not their own, and conſequently they were not afraid to uſe them with licence and exceſs; ſuch perſons as the ſuitors having no regard for any thing that belongs to another.

Horace makes uſe of the ſame expreſſion,

" Cum rapies in jus, malis ridentem alienis."

And likewiſe Valerius;

" Errantesque genæ, atque alieno gaudia vultu."

This is the opinion of Dacier: but there are ſome lines in the Greek that make it doubtful; for immediately after the expreſſion of laughing with other mens cheeks, Homer adds, that their eyes flowed with tears, and ſorrow ſeized their ſouls. It is true Homer deſcribes the ſuitors under an alienation of mind, and a ſudden diſtraction occaſioned by Minerva; and from hence we may gather the reaſons why they are toſt by ſo ſudden a tranſition to contrary paſſions, from laughter to tears: this moment they laugh extravagantly, and the next they weep with equal exceſs; perſons in ſuch a condition being liable to ſuch viciſſitudes.

v. 417. *Floating in gore, portentous to ſurvey!*
In each diſcolour'd vaſe the viands lay.]

This is to be looked upon as a prodigy, the belief of which was eſtabliſhed in the old world, and conſequently, whether true or falſe, may be allowed to have a place in poetry. See book xii. note on v. 464.

In the following ſpeech of Theoclymenus there is a beautiful enthuſiaſm of poetry; but how are we to underſtand that Theoclymenus ſees theſe wonders, when they are inviſible to all the ſuitors? Theoclymenus was a prophet, and ſpeaks of things future as preſent; it is the eye of the prophet that ſees theſe events, and the language of prophecy that ſpeaks of them as preſent. Thus when he ſays he ſees the palace red with blood, and thronged with ghoſts; he anticipates the event, which is verified in the approaching death of the ſuitors.

Euſtathius is of opinion, that by the laſt words of this ſpeech Theoclymenus intends to expreſs an eclipſe of the ſun; this being the day of the new moon, when eclipſes happen. Others underſtand by it the death of the ſuitors, as when we ſay the ſun is for ever gone down upon the dead: Theocritus uſes that expreſſion, θνήσκουτι πάντα δεδυκεῖν ἠέλιον. Homer means by it, that the ſuitors ſhall never more behold the light of the ſun.

——— ἠέλιῳ δὲ
Οὐρανῷ ἐξαπόλωλε ———

Then down each cheek the tears ſpontaneous flow,
And ſudden ſighs precede approaching woe.
In viſion wrapt; the * Hypereſian ſeer
Uproſe, and thus divin'd the vengeance near.
O race to death devote! with Stygian ſhade
Each deſtin'd peer impending fates invade:
With tears your wan diſtorted cheeks are drown'd;
With ſanguine drops the walls are rubied round:
Thick ſwarms the ſpacious hall with howling ghoſts,
To people Orcus, and the burning coaſts!
Nor gives the ſun his golden orb to roll,
But univerſal night uſurps the pole!
Yet warn'd in vain, with laughter loud elate
The peers reproach the ſure divine of fate;
And thus Eurymachus: the dotard's mind
To ev'ry ſenſe is loſt, to reaſon blind:
Swift from the dome conduct the ſlave away;
Let him in open air behold the day.
Tax not, (the heav'n-illumin'd ſeer rejoin'd)
Of rage, or folly, my prophetic mind.

So far Euſtathius. It may be added that the Roman poets uſed the ſame expreſſion in this latter ſignification. Thus Catullus,

" Nobis, quùm ſemel occidit brevis lux,
" Nox eſt perpetua una dormienda."

Either of theſe expoſitions makes the paſſage intelligible.

* Theoclymenus.

v. 436. *Let him in open air behold the day.*] The ſuitors taking the prediction of Theoclymenus literally, viz. " I ſee you all in-" volved in darkneſs," think him diſtracted, not conceiving his words to be a prophecy; and therefore by way of deriſion command him to be carried into a place of public reſort, that he may convince himſelf it is full day. Euſtathius imagines, they intended to reproach him with drunkenneſs, becauſe it makes all objects appear indiſtinct and different from the reality: he quotes a pleaſant expreſſion of Anacharſis to this purpoſe: a certain perſon telling him at an entertainment that he had married a very ugly woman; " I think ſo too, replies Anacharſis; but fill me a bumper, that " I may make her a beauty."

v. 437. *Tax not, (the heav'n-illumin'd ſeer rejoin'd,)* &c.] Euſtathius explains the anſwer of Theoclymenus to be both pleaſant and

No clouds of errour dim th' ethereal rays,
Her equal pow'r each faithful ſenſe obeys.
Unguided hence my trembling ſteps I bend,
Far hence, before yon' hov'ring deaths deſcend;
Leſt the ripe harveſt of revenge begun
I ſhare the doom ye ſuitors cannot ſhun.
This ſaid, to ſage Piræus ſped the ſeer,
His honour'd hoſt, a welcome inmate there.
O'er the protracted feaſt the ſuitors ſit,
And aim to wound the prince with pointleſs wit:
Cries one, with ſcornful leer and mimic voice,
Thy charity we praiſe, but not thy choice;
Why ſuch profuſion of indulgence ſhown
To this poor, tim'rous, toil-deteſting drone?
That other feeds on planetary ſchemes,
And pays his hoſt with hideous noon-day dreams.
But, prince! for once at leaſt believe a friend,
To ſome Sicilian mart theſe courtiers ſend,

ſerious: "I have eyes, and therefore have no occaſion for a guide "to lead me from the palace; I have ears, and therefore hear that "my abſence is deſired; I have both my feet, and therefore am "able to go away without giving others the trouble to aſſiſt me; "and I have an underſtanding well informed, by which I ſee the "evil that threatens the ſuitors, and haſte away to avoid it."

v. 456. *To ſome Sicilian mart theſe courtiers ſend.*] It is evident from this paſſage that the name of Sicily is very antient, and Euſtathius makes the following remark upon it: that the reaſon why the poet never mentions this word in deſcribing the wanderings of Ulyſſes which happen chiefly near Sicily, is to make his poetry more ſurprizing and marvellous; and that the more to countenance thoſe fabulous relations and miracles which he has told to the Phæacians, he chuſes to ſpeak of it by names leſs known, and leſs familiar to his readers. Dacier obſerves from Bochart, that this iſland received the name of Sicily from the Phœnicians long before the birth of Homer, or the war of Troy: Siclul in their language ſignifies "perfection;" they called it the "iſle of perfection," becauſe it held the chief rank amongſt all the iſlands in the Mediterranean: "It is the largeſt and beſt iſland in all our ſeas," ſays Strabo. It has likewiſe been thought to have taken its name from the Syrian language, namely from Segol, or Segul, a raiſin. For long before the vine was known in Afric, Sicily was famous for its vineyards, and from thence the Carthaginians imported their

Where, if they yield their freight acroſs the main,
Dear ſell the ſlaves! demand no greater gain.
Thus jovial they; but nought the prince replies;
Full on his ſire he roll'd his ardent eyes;
Impatient ſtraight to fleſh his virgin-ſword;
From the wiſe chief he waits the deathful word.
Nigh in her bright alcove, the penſive queen
To ſee the circle ſat, of all unſeen.
Sated at length they riſe, and bid prepare
An eve-repaſt, with equal coſt and care:
But vengeful Pallas, with preventing ſpeed
A feaſt proportion'd to their crimes decreed;
A feaſt of death! the feaſters doom'd to bleed!

raiſins and wines. Homer celebrates this iſland for its wines in the ninth Odyſſey,

> Spontaneous wines from weighty cluſters pour,
> And Jove deſcends in each prolific ſhow'r.

It is likewiſe probable from this paſſage, that the Sicilians traded in ſlaves; for their lands were fertile, and they merchandized for them to manure the ground. I ſhould rather think that they were remarkable for their barbarity to their ſlaves; the ſuitors ſpeaking by way of terrour to intimidate Theoclymenus; and the expreſſion ſeems to bear the ſame import with that concerning Echetus, we will "ſend him to Echetus, or the Sicilians, who will uſe "him with the utmoſt cruelty.

v. 463. *Nigh in her bright alcove, the penſive queen.*] The word in the original is Λίγρᾳ, and ſignifies a large ſeat that would hold two perſons, from δὶς ὄχεσθαι.

This circumſtance (obſerves Euſtathius) is not inſerted in vain: the poet deſcribes Penelope thus ſeated, that ſhe might ſee and hear the actions and deſigns of the ſuitors, in order to form her conduct according to the occaſion; now for inſtance, ſhe perceives their inſolence riſen to ſuch an height, that ſhe dares make no further delay, but immediately proclaims herſelf the prize of the beſt archer: and this naturally connects the ſtory with the next book.

THE

ODYSSEY.

* BOOK XXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The bending of Ulyſſes's bow.

Penelope, to put an end to the ſolicitation of the ſuitors, propoſes to marry the perſon who ſhall firſt bend the bow of Ulyſſes, and ſhoot through the ringlets. After their attempts have proved ineffectual, Ulyſſes taking Eumæus and Philætius apart diſcovers himſelf to them; then returning, deſires leave to try his ſtrength at the bow, which though refuſed with indignation by the ſuitors, Penelope and Telemachus cauſe it to be delivered to his hands. He bends it immediately, and ſhoots through all the rings. Jupiter in the ſame inſtant thunders from heaven; Ulyſſes accepts the omen, and gives a ſign to Telemachus, who ſtands ready armed at his ſide.

AND Pallas now to raiſe the rivals fires,
With her own art Penelope inſpires:
Who now can bend Ulyſſes' bow, and wing
The well-aim'd arrow thro' the diſtant ring,

* This book is intitled Τόξου Θέσις, or the "propoſition of the "bow:" this action of Penelope has given occaſion of raillery both to modern and antient critics; they inſinuate that ſhe propoſed this excerciſe of the bow to try the ſtrength of her gallants, determining to have regard to that ſingle qualification in the choice of her huſband.

"Penelope vires juvenum tentabat in arcu,
"Qui latus argueret, corneus arcus erat."

They interpret νευρὴν ενλάνυσαι into a ſenſe very contrary to the character of Penelope. It is true, other authors have directly charged

Shall end the ſtriſe, and win th' imperial dame;
But diſcord and black death await the game!
The prudent queen the lofty ſtair aſcends,
At diſtance due a virgin-train attends;
A brazen key ſhe held, the handle turn'd,
With ſteel and poliſh'd elephant adorn'd:

her with inchaſtity, and affirm that ſhe had a ſon named Pan, becauſe all the ſuitors had a ſhare in him. Lycophron calls her

Βασσάρην σεμνῶς κασσωρεύσαν.

It is the exerciſe of the bow that has occaſioned theſe imputations; for none of Homer's commentators have given the reaſon why ſhe propoſes that exerciſe in particular; and therefore ſeeing no reaſon for it, they have invented a falſe one, and give the ſtory a ridiculous air; I flatter myſelf that a better ſolution may be found out, and a reaſon given why Penelope propoſes this exerciſe in particular, and preferable to any other.

We are to remember that this day was ſacred to Apollo; this is evident from the preceding book, where the Ithacans offer an hecatomb in a grove conſecrated to that deity: the diverſion ſuits the day, the exerciſe of the bow being proper to be practiſed on the feſtival of that deity, who is the patron of it. Several of the titles of Apollo are derived from it; Ἑκάεργος, Ἑκατηβόλος, Ἀργυρότοξος. It is ſtrange that this neceſſary obſervation ſhould eſcape the notice of all commentators.

If any thing further were wanting to reconcile us to the conduct of Penelope in propoſing the bow, an inſtance almoſt parallel to it might be produced from hiſtory. When Cambyſes was preparing to make war againſt Æthiopia, the King of that country bent his great bow with two fingers in the preſence of the Perſian ambaſſadors, and unbending it again, delivered it to them with theſe words, That when the Perſians could do the like, they might hope to conquer the Æthiopians. There is nothing more abſurd in the delivery of the bow to the ſuitors by Penelope, than in the ſame act of the Æthiopian king to the Perſian ambaſſadors.

v. 9. *A brazen key ſhe held*, &c.] The numerous particularities and digreſſive hiſtories crowded together in the beginning of this book have not eſcaped cenſure. The poet very circumſtantially deſcribes the key, and the make of it, as likewiſe the bow and quiver, then tells us who gave it to Ulyſſes: at the mention of the donor's name he ſtarts into a little hiſtory of him, and returns not in many lines to his ſubject; he then no leſs circumſtantially deſcribes the chamber, and the frame of the door, he deſcends to every particular of Penelope's opening it, and every ſtep and motion ſhe takes till ſhe produces the bow before the ſuitors. This conduct has been liable to objection, as made up of particulars of ſmall importance

Swift to the inmoſt room ſhe bent her way,
Where ſafe repos'd the royal treaſures lay;
There ſhone high heap'd the labour'd braſs and ore,
And there the bow which great Ulyſſes bore,
And there the quiver, where now guiltleſs ſlept
Thoſe winged deaths that many a matron wept.
This gift, long ſince when Sparta's ſhores he trod,
On young Ulyſſes Iphitus beſtow'd:
Beneath Orſilochus's roof they met;
One loſs was private, one a public debt;
Meſſena's ſtate from Ithaca detains
Three hundred ſheep, and all the ſhepherd-ſwains;

to no propoſed end. But notwithſtanding, every circumſtance is not without its effect and beauty, and nothing better ſhews the power of the poet's diction. So great a critic as Vida admired this very paſſage. Poetic. lib. ii.

" Ipſa procos etiam ut juſſit certare ſagittis
" Penelope, optatas promittens callida tædas
" Victori, per quanta moræ diſpendia mentes
" Suſpenſas trahit, ante viri quam proferat arcum?"

The poet adapts his verſe to the nature of his ſubject; the deſcription loiters, to expreſs the ſtudied delay of Penelope, and her unwillingneſs to bring affairs to a deciſion. However I will not promiſe that theſe digreſſions and antient hiſtories will pleaſe every reader; the paſſage is ſo far from being faulty, that it is really an inſtance of Homer's judgment; yet every thing that is not a fault, is not a beauty. The caſe is, Penelope propoſes the trial of the bow, merely to protract time from the nuptials; ſhe is ſlow in producing it for the ſame reaſon; and Homer to paint this ſlowneſs in a lively manner, lets the ſubject of the poem ſtand ſtill, and wanders out of the way, that he may not come too ſoon to the end of his journey.

v. 21. *Meſſena's ſtate*, &c.] It has been diſputed whether Meſſene here was a city or a country; Strabo affirms it to be a country, lib. viii. It was a port of Laconia, under the dominion of Menelaus in the time of the war with Troy; and then (continues that author) the city named Meſſene was not built. Pauſanias is of the ſame opinion, lib. iv. c. 1. " Before the battle of Leuctra " between the Thebans and Lacedæmonians, it is my judgment " that there was no city called Meſſene;" this is evident from the words of Homer,

Τὼ δὲ ἐν Μεσσήνῃ ξυμβλήτην ἀλλήλοιϊν
Οἴκῳ ἐν Ὀρσιλόχοιο.

And to the youthful prince to urge the laws,
The king and elders truſt their common cauſe,
But Iphitus employ'd on other cares,
Search'd the wide country for his wand'ring mares,
And mules, the ſtrongeſt of the lab'ring kind;
Hapleſs to ſearch! more hapleſs ſtill to find!
For journeying on to Hercules, at length
That lawleſs wretch, that man of brutal ſtrength,
Deaf to heav'n's voice, the ſocial rite tranſgreſt;
And for the beauteous mares deſtroy'd his gueſt:

Now Orſilochus lived in Pheræ, a city of Meſſenia, and conſequently Ulyſſes and Iphitus meeting at his palace in Meſſenia, Homer muſt mean the country, not the city. That Orſilochus lived in Pheræ, appears from the third Odyſſey.

Ἐς φηρὰς δ' ἵκονθο Διοκλῆος ποτὶ δῶμα,
Υἱος Ὀρσιλόχοιο.

This Iphitus was the ſon of Eurytus mentioned in the eighth book, famous for his ſkill in archery.

Vain Eurytus! whoſe art became his crime,
Swept from the earth, he periſh'd in his prime,
Sudden th' irremeable way he trod,
Who boldly durſt defy the bowyer-god.

So that even this diſgreſſion is not foreign to the purpoſe: the poet largely deſcribes the bow, being to make great uſe of it in the ſequel of the Odyſſey: he ſhews it was originally in the poſſeſſion of Eurytus, the moſt famous archer in the world: nay, this very digreſſion may appear to be abſolutely neceſſary; it being requiſite to deſcribe that bow, as of no common excellence and ſtrength, which was not to be drawn by any of the ſuitors; and at the ſame time it ſets off the ſtrength of the hero of the poem, who alone is able to bend it.

v. 22. *Three hundred ſheep*, &c.] It has been obſerved in a former annotation, that ſuch ravages or piracies were not only lawful but honourable amongſt the antients; why then is Ulyſſes here ſent to redemand the ſpoils made by the Meſſenians? Dacier anſwers, that ſuch inroads were not allowable except in open war: ſhe means between Greeks and Greeks; for they themſelves exerciſed ſuch piracies with impunity againſt other nations.

v. 31. *Deaf to heav'n's voice, the ſocial rite tranſgreſt.*] Homer very ſolemnly condemns this action of Hercules in ſlaying Iphitus; and ſome authors (remarks Euſtathius) defend him by ſaying, he was ſeized with madneſs, and threw Iphitus down from the top of hi-

He gave the bow; and on Ulyſſes' part
Receiv'd a pointed ſword and miſſile dart:
Of luckleſs friendſhip on a foreign ſhore
Their firſt, laſt pledges! for they met no more.
The bow, bequeath'd by this unhappy hand,
Ulyſſes bore not from his native land;
Nor in the front of battle taught to bend,
But kept, in dear memorial of his friend.
Now gently winding up the fair aſcent,
By many an eaſy ſtep, the matron went;
Then o'er the pavements glides with grace divine,
(With poliſh'd oak the level pavements ſhine)
The folding gates a dazzling light diſplay'd,
With pomp of various architrave o'erlay'd.
The bolt, obedient to the ſilken ſtring,
Forſakes the ſtaple as ſhe pulls the ring;

palace; but this is contrary to Homer, and to the ſentiment of thoſe who write that Hercules was delivered as a ſlave to Omphale, for the expiation of the murder of Iphitus.

But what chiefly wants explication is the expreſſion,

——— οὐδὲ τράπεζαν
Ἠδέσατ.———

That is, "he paid no reverence to his table." The table was held ſacred by the antients, by means of which, honour was paid to the god of friendſhip and hoſpitality: it was therefore a crime to diſhonour it by any indecent behaviour. To this purpoſe Juvenal:

"Hic verbis nullus pudor, aut reverentia menſæ."

The ſtatues of the gods were raiſed upon the tables, they were conſecrated by placing on them ſalt, which was always eſteemed holy, and by offering libations to the gods from them: the table therefore is called in Plutarch φιλίων Θεῶν βωμὸν. καὶ ξενίων, "the "altar of the gods of friendſhip and hoſpitality;" and therefore to have eaten at the ſame table, was eſteemed an inviolable obligation of friendſhip: and τράπεζαν παραβαίνειν, to tranſgreſs againſt the table, a breach of the laws of hoſpitality, and the blackeſt of crimes. I will only add, that it was cuſtomary upon making an alliance of hoſpitality to give mutual tokens; thus Ulyſſes here preſents Iphitus with a ſword and ſpear; Iphitus Ulyſſes with a bow. And the producing theſe tokens was a recognition of the covenant of hoſpitality between the perſons themſelves, and their deſcendants in following generations.

The wards reſpondent to the key turn round;
The bars fall back; the flying valves reſound;
Loud as a bull makes hill and valley ring,
So roar'd the lock when it releas'd the ſpring.
She moves majeſtic thro' the wealthy room,
Where treaſur'd garments caſt a rich perfume;
There from the column where aloft it hung,
Reach'd, in its ſplendid caſe, the bow unſtrung:
Acroſs her knees ſhe lay'd the well-known bow,
And penſive ſat, and tears began to flow.
To full ſatiety of grief ſhe mourns,
Then ſilent, to the joyous hall returns,
To the proud ſuitors bears in penſive ſtate
Th' unbended bow, and arrows wing'd with fate.
Behind, her train the poliſh'd coffer brings
Which held th' alternate braſs and ſilver rings,
Full in the portal the chaſte queen appears,
And with her veil conceals the coming tears:
On either ſide awaits a virgin fair;
While thus the matron, with majeſtic air.

v. 51. *Loud as a bull makes hill and valley ring.*] This deſcription preſents us with a noble image: Homer introduces it to ſhew the largeneſs and ſtrength of the door, which reſounds as it opens. This exalts a trifling circumſtance into ſublimity and dignity, and renders a common action poetical; not unlike that in the xxivth of the Iliad.

Wide as appears ſome palace-gate diſplay'd,
So broad his pinions ſtretch'd their ample ſhade.

v. 57. *Acroſs her knees ſhe laid the well known bow,*
And penſive ſat, and tears began to flow.]

The bow recalls to her mind the thought of her huſband, and this raiſes her ſorrows. The leaſt trifle that once belonged to a beloved perſon, is ſufficient to caſt a cloud over the ſoul, which naturally falls in a ſhower of tears: and no doubt the exerciſe which the ſuitors are to practiſe with the bow, upon which her future fate depends, aggravates her ſorrows; ſhe weeps not only for the loſs of Ulyſſes, but at the thought that ſhe is ready to enter upon ſecond nuptials, contrary to her inclinations.

Say you, whom theſe forbidden walls incloſe,
For whom my victims bleed, my vintage flows;
If theſe neglected, faded charms can move?
Or is it but a vain pretence, you love?
If I the prize, if me you ſeek to wife,
Hear the conditions, and commence the ſtrife.
Who firſt Ulyſſes' wond'rous bow ſhall bend,
And thro' twelve ringlets the fleet arrow ſend,
Him will I follow, and forſake my home,
For him forſake this lov'd, this wealthy dome,
Long, long the ſcene of all my paſt delight,
And ſtill to laſt, the viſion of my night!
Graceful ſhe ſaid, and bade Eumæus ſhow
The rival peers the ringlets and the bow.
From his full eyes the tears unbidden ſpring
Touch'd at the dear memorials of his king.
Philætius too relents, but ſecret ſhed
The tender drops. Antinous ſaw, and ſaid.
Hence to your fields, ye ruſtics! hence away,
Nor ſtain with grief the pleaſures of the day;
Nor to the royal heart recall in vain
The ſad remembrance of a periſh'd man.
Enough her precious tears already flow—
Or ſhare the feaſt with due reſpect, or go
To weep abroad, and leave to us the bow:
No vulgar taſk! Ill ſuits this courtly crew
That ſtubborn horn which brave Ulyſſes drew.
I well remember (for I gaz'd him o'er
While yet a child) what majeſty he bore!
And ſtill (all infant as I was) retain
The port, the ſtrength, the grandeur of the man.
He ſaid, but in his ſoul fond joys ariſe,
And his proud hopes already win the prize.
To ſpeed the flying ſhaft thro' every ring,
Wretch! is not thine! the arrows of the king
Shall end thoſe hopes, and fate is on the wing!

Then thus Telemachus. Some god I find
With pleaſing phrenzy has poſſeſs'd my mind;
When a lov'd mother threatens to depart,
Why with this ill-tim'd gladneſs leaps my heart?
Come then, ye ſuitors! and diſpute a prize
Richer than all th' Achaian ſtate ſupplies,
Than all proud Argos, or Mycæna knows,
Than all our iſles or continents encloſe:
A woman matchleſs, and almoſt divine,
Fit for the praiſe of ev'ry tongue but mine.
No more excuſes then, no more delay;
Haſte to the trial—Lo! I lead the way.
I too may try, and if this arm can wing
The feather'd arrow thro' the deſtin'd ring,
Then if no happier knight the conqueſt boaſt,
I ſhall not ſorrow for a mother loſt;
But bleſt in her, poſſeſs theſe arms alone,
Heir of my father's ſtrength, as well as throne.

v. 105. *Then thus Telemachus. Some god I find*, &c.] This ſpeech is not without greater obſcurity than is uſual in ſo clear a writer as Homer. M. Dacier has done it juſtice, and clearly opened the ſenſe of it in her paraphraſe. Surely, ſays Telemachus, Jupiter has diſordered my underſtanding, I ſee my mother, wife as "ſhe is, preparing to leave the palace, and enter upon a ſecond "marriage; and yet in theſe melancholy circumſtances, I think "of nothing but diverting myſelf, and being an idle ſpectator of "this exerciſe of the bow: no, no, this is not to be ſuffered: you "(the ſuitors) uſe your utmoſt efforts to rob me of Penelope, I "will therefore uſe mine to retain her: a woman the moſt excellent in any nation. But why do I praiſe her? you know her "worth; uſe therefore no pretext to defer the trial of the bow, "that we may come to an iſſue; I will try the bow with you; "and if I ſucceed, then I will retain her as the prize of the conqueſt; then ſhe ſhall not be obliged to ſecond nuptials: nor will "Penelope abandon a ſon, who emulating his father, is (like "him) able to bear the prize from ſo many antagoniſts."

This is the true meaning of the words of Telemachus; the diction indeed is ſomewhat embarraſſed, and the connexion a little obſcure; but this is done by the poet, to expreſs the diſorder and hurry of mind in Telemachus, who fears for the fate of Penelope: therefore the connexion of the periods is interrupted, to repreſent Telemachus ſtarting through eagerneſs of ſpirit from thought to thought, without order or regularity.

He ſpoke; then riſing, his broad ſword unbound,
And caſt his purple garment on the ground.
A trench he open'd; in a line he plac'd
The level axes, and the points made faſt.
(His perfect ſkill the wond'ring gazers ey'd,
The game as yet unſeen, as yet untry'd.)
Then, with a manly pace, he took his ſtand;
And graſp'd the bow, and twang'd it in his hand.
Three times, with beating heart, he made eſſay;
Three times, unequal to the taſk gave way:
A modeſt boldneſs on his cheek appear'd:
And thrice he hop'd, and thrice again he fear'd,
The fourth had drawn it. The great ſire with joy
Beheld, but with a ſign forbade the boy.
His ardour ſtraight th' obedient prince ſuppreſt,
And artful, thus the ſuitor-train addreſt.

v. 135. *The fourth had drawn it. The great ſire with joy Beheld, but with a ſign forbade.*—]

It is not apparent at the firſt view why Ulyſſes prohibits Telemachu' from drawing the bow; but Euſtathius gives ſufficient reaſon for this conduct: it would have defeated his whole deſign, and rendered the death of the ſuitors impracticable; for Telemachus has declared that he would retain Penelope, if he ſucceeded in the exerciſe of the bow; and this of neceſſity would create an immediate conteſt between that hero and the ſuitors, and bring matters unſeaſonably to extremity. The ſame author aſſigns a ſecond reaſon: Ulyſſes fears leſt Telemachus, by bending the bow, ſhould make it more ſupple and flexible, and therefore commands him to deſiſt, leſt it ſhould be drawn by the ſuitors; beſides, if he had drawn it, it would have raiſed an emulation amongſt them, and they would have applied the utmoſt of their abilities not to be outdone by ſo young a perſon as Telemachus; but his deſpair to effect it, makes them leſs ſolicitous, the trial being equally unſucceſsful to them all.

It may alſo be obſerved, that there is a very happy addreſs made to Telemachus by Homer; he ſhews us that he could have drawn it, but deſiſts in obedience to Ulyſſes: thus the poet has found out a way to give Telemachus the honour of the victory without obtaining it; and at the ſame time ſhews the ſuperior wiſdom of Ulyſſes, who reſtrains his ſon in the heat of his attempt; and makes him, by a happy preſence of mind, at once foreſee the danger, and prevent it.

Oh lay the cauſe on youth yet immature!
(For heav'n forbid, ſuch weakneſs ſhould endure)
How ſhall this arm, unequal to the bow,
Retort an inſult, or repel a foe?
But you! whom heav'n with better nerves has bleſt,
Accept the trial, and the prize conteſt.
He caſt the bow before him, and apart
Againſt the poliſh'd quiver propt the dart.
Reſuming then his ſeat, Epitheus' ſon
The bold Antinous to the reſt begun.
" From where the goblet firſt begins to flow,
" From right to left, in order take the bow;
" And prove your ſeveral ſtrengths"—The princes heard,
And firſt Leiodes, blameleſs prieſt, appear'd:

v. 149. *From where the goblet firſt begins to flow, From right to left*, &c.]

Antinous makes this propoſition, that every perſon may try his ſkill without confuſion. Perhaps it is propoſed by Antinous by way of omen, the right hand being reckoned fortunate: but however that be, it is very evident that in the entertainments of the antients the cup was delivered towards the right hand: hence δεξιώσις came to ſignify to drink towards the right hand; and Athenæus thus interprets this paſſage in the firſt of the Iliad.

——— χρυσείοις δεπάεσσι
Δειδέχατ' ἀλλήλους. ———

Which, remarks that author, ſignifies ἐδεξιοῦτο προπίνοντες ἑαυτοῖς ταῖς δεξιαῖς. And there is expreſs mention made of this practice, lib. 1. v. 597. of the Iliad.

——— θεοῖς ἐνδέξια πᾶσιν
Οἰνοχοεῖ ———

That is, " beginning from the right hand," as the ſcholiaſt rightly interprets it, " Vulcan delivered the bowl to all the gods."

This obſervation explains various paſſages in many antient authors, as well as in the Iliad and Odyſſey: the cuſtom indeed is not of any great importance, but is at leaſt a curioſity, and valuable becauſe antient. I doubt not but the bowl out of which theſe perſons drank, would by antiquaries be thought ineſtimable; and the poſſeſſion of an antient bowl is not quite ſo valuable as the knowledge of an antient cuſtom.

v. 152. ——— *Leiodes, blameleſs prieſt.*] The word in the original is θυοσκόος, a perſon who makes predictions from victims or

The eldeſt born of Oenops' noble race,
Who next the goblet held his holy place:
He, only he, of all the ſuitor-throng,
Their deeds deteſted, and abjur'd the wrong.
With tender hands the ſtubborn horn he ſtrains,
The ſtubborn horn reſiſted all his pains!
Already in deſpair he gives it o'er:
Take it who will, he cries, I ſtrive no more.
What num'rous deaths attend this fatal bow?
What ſouls and ſpirits ſhall it ſend below?

from the ſmoke of the ſacrifice. This Leiodes, the poet tells us, ſat next to the bowl; the reaſon of it, ſaith Euſtathius, was becauſe the ſuitors feared leſt poiſon ſhould be mixed in it, and they thought themſelves ſafe through his care and inſpection: but it may perhaps be a better reaſon to ſay, that he ſat there in diſcharge of his office as a prophet, to make libations to the gods; as was cuſtomary at the beginning and end of all entertainments.

The poet adds, that this prophet was placed at the extremity of the apartment; the reaſon may be becauſe he was an enemy to the inſolence of the ſuitors; and therefore withdrew from their converſation; or perhaps the word is inſerted only to ſhew that his place was the firſt, (for Euſtathius explains μυχοίτατος by πρῶτος and ἐνδότατος) and therefore he was the moſt proper perſon to begin the experiment, that the reſt might make trial according as they were ſeated, ſucceſſively; and what makes this the more probable is, that the propination always began from the moſt honourable perſon.

v. 161. *What num'rous deaths attend this fatal bow?*
What ſouls and ſpirits, &c.]

There is in theſe words a full and clear prediction of the deſtruction of the ſuitors by the bow of Ulyſſes: but what follows, when the prophet comes to explain himſelf renders it ambiguous. "Better indeed to die," &c. The next line is very remarkable for the diſtinction it makes between θυμὸς and ψυχὴ, ſoul and ſpirit: the reader may turn to the note on lib. xxiii. v. 92, 124. of the Iliad; and that on lib. xi. v. 743. of the Odyſſey, where an account is given of the notion of the ancients concerning this diviſion. I ſhall only here add a paſſage in St. Paul to the Hebrews, which did not then occur to me, that remarkably falls in with it. "The word of God is quick and powerful, and ſharper than a two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit." Heb. iv. 12.

This Leiodes falls by the ſword of Ulyſſes in the next book: is it not injuſtice to take away the life of a perſon who is here deſcribed as a man of virtue, deteſting the actions of the ſuitors, and

Better indeed to die, and fairly give
Nature her debt, than diſappointed live,
With each new ſun to ſome new hope a prey,
Yet ſtill to-morrow falſer than to-day.
How long in vain Penelope we ſought?
This bow ſhall eaſe us of that idle thought,
And ſend us with ſome humbler wife to live,
Whom gold ſhall gain, or deſtiny ſhall give.
Thus ſpeaking on the floor the bow he plac'd,
(With rich inlay the various floor was grac'd)
At diſtance far the feather'd ſhaft he throws,
And to the ſeat returns from whence he roſe.
To him Antinous thus with fury ſaid,
What words ill-omen'd from thy lips have fled?
Thy coward-function ever is in fear;
Thoſe arms are dreadful which thou can'ſt not bear.
Why ſhould this bow be fatal to the brave?
Becauſe the prieſt is born a peaceful ſlave.
Mark then what others can—He ended there,
And bade Melanthius a vaſt pile prepare;
He gives it inſtant flame: then faſt beſide
Spreads o'er an ample board a bullock's hide.
With melted lard they ſoak the weapon o'er,
Chaſe ev'ry knot and ſupple ev'ry pore.

dignified with prophecy? It is eaſy to anſwer this objection; he is one of the ſuitors to Penelope, as appears from his trying the bow among the reſt of them, in order to obtain her in marriage, and conſequently he is involved in the general crime: this diſtinguiſhes his caſe from that of Medon and Phemius, whom Ulyſſes ſpares; it appearing that they made no pretenſions to the bed of Penelope; whereas Leiodes endeavours to marry the queen, which ſingle act would exclude Ulyſſes from his own bed and dominions. Beſides, if we would eſcape the puniſhment of wicked men, we muſt not only deteſt their crimes, but converſation.

v. 186. *Chaſe ev'ry knot, and ſupple ev'ry pore.*] This paſſage has been egregiouſly miſunderſtood, and it has been imagined that this unguent is to anoint the limbs of the ſuitors to make them more ſupple, after the manner of the wreſtlers who obſerved that cuſtom; but it is very evident that τόξον is to be underſtood in the

Vain all their art, and all their ſtrength as vain;
The bow inflexible reſiſts their pain.
The force of great Eurymachus alone
And bold Antinous, yet untry'd, unknown:
Thoſe only now remain'd; but thoſe confeſt
Of all the train the mightieſt and the beſt.
Then from the hall, and from the noiſy crew,
The maſters of the herd and flock withdrew.

Greek, and that it is the bow, not the limbs of the ſuitors, that is to be anointed. Euſtathius thus fully explains it: the lard is brought to make the bow pliant, they chafe it before the fire that the particles of it may enter the pores of the bow, and render it flexible. But Euſtathius falls into an errour about the feat that is brought by Melanthius: he imagines the ſuitors ſat while they drew the bow, that they might be upon a level with the ringlets which were fixed upon the ground; whereas in reality the ſeat is brought, that they may ſit while they chafe the bow. Homer himſelf ſays, when Leiodes endeavours to draw it, that he ſtood up, ἀνίσατο, and again,

He ſtood, and ſtepping forward try'd the bow.
Στῆ δ' ἀρ' ἐπ' ἰθὺν ἰὼν, καὶ τόξα πειρήτιζεν.

But how is this to be reconciled with the conduct of Ulyſſes, who is directly affirmed to ſit while he draws it.

——εἵλκεν νευρὴν γλυφίδασε
Αὐτόθεν ἐκ δίφροιο καθήμενος——

That circumſtance is inſerted to ſhew the great ſtrength and dexterity of Ulyſſes, who is able to draw it in that diſadvantageous poſture: the poet in every incident maintains his ſuperiority.

v. 193. *Then from the hall, and from the noiſy crew,*
The maſters of the herd and flock withdrew.]

It is wonderful how exactly the poet obſerves the diſtribution of time; he diſtinctly marks the action of every day, and allots a proper ſpace to every action. In this place the poem goes forward while Ulyſſes withdraws to engage the aſſiſtance of Philætius and Eumæus. The ſuitors are amuſed and employed about the bow, while Ulyſſes ſteals away from their obſervation, and returns without raiſing their jealouſy. The poet likewiſe manages the time of the diſcovery of Ulyſſes very judiciouſly; though he knew the fidelity of Eumæus and Philætius, yet he truſts them not with the knowledge of his perſon, till the very hour of execution; agreeable to the general character of his cautious nature and profound

The king obſerves them: he the hall forſakes,
And, paſt the limits of the court, o'ertakes,
Then thus with accent mild Ulyſſes ſpoke:
Ye faithful guardians of the herd and flock!
Shall I the ſecret of my breaſt conceal,
Or (as my ſoul now dictates) ſhall I tell?
Say, ſhou'd ſome fav'ring god reſtore again
The loſt Ulyſſes to his native reign?
How beat your hearts? what aid wou'd you afford?
To the proud ſuitors, or your ancient lord?
Philætius thus. Oh were thy word not vain!
Wou'd mighty Jove reſtore that man again!
Theſe aged ſinews with new vigour ſtrung
In his bleſt cauſe ſhould emulate the young.
With equal vows Eumæus too implor'd
Each pow'r above, with wiſhes for his lord.
He ſaw their ſecret ſouls, and thus began.
Thoſe vows the gods accord: behold the man!
Your own Ulyſſes! twice ten years detain'd
By woes and wand'rings from this hapleſs land:
At length he comes; but comes deſpis'd, unknown,
And finding faithful, you, and you alone.
All elſe have caſt him from their very thought,
Ev'n in their wiſhes, and their pray'rs forgot!
Hear then, my friends! If Jove this arm ſucceed,
And give yon' impious revellers to bleed,

ſecrecy. But then is not this an imputation to Penelope, that he ſhould chuſe to diſcover himſelf to theſe two perſons, rather than to his queen? The anſwer is, There was a neceſſity for his diſcovery to the former, but none to the latter; he wants their aſſiſtance in the future engagement, and makes good uſe of it; whereas a diſcovery made to the queen could have been of no advantage, and might poſſibly have proved detrimental; beſides, this is a ſeaſon that requires expedition; and we find Ulyſſes complies with it, and is very conciſe in the diſcovery and interview with Philætius and Eumæus. The poet therefore reſerves the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Penelope to a time of more leiſure, that he may dwell upon it more largely, and beautify his poem with ſo eſſential an ornament with greater ſolemnity.

My care ſhall be, to bleſs your future lives
With large poſſeſſions, and with faithful wives;
Fait by my palace ſhall your domes aſcend,
And each on young Telemachus attend,
And each be call'd his brother, and my friend.
To give you firmer faith, now truſt your eye;
Lo! the broad ſcar indented on my thigh,
When with Autolychus's ſons, of yore,
On Parnaſs' top I chas'd the tuſky boar.
His ragged veſt then drawn aſide diſclos'd
The ſign conſpicuous, and the ſcar expos'd:

v. 231. ——— *and the ſcar expos'd.*] Ariſtotle treating of the different ſorts of remembrances, chap. xvii. of his Poetics, divides them into two kinds, " natural or adventitious;" the former ſort is ſimple and without art, which poets uſe for want of invention; as for inſtance, when they bring about the diſcovery of a perſon by ſome natural mark or token upon the body: the latter are either marks upon the body, or ſcars occaſioned by ſome accident, or token diſtinct from the body, ſuch as the caſket, &c. which Plautus and Terence uſe in the diſcovery of ſeveral perſons in their comedies: of this latter kind is this ſcar of Ulyſſes; it is an adventitious remembrance, and theſe remembrances (continues Ariſtotle) may be uſed with more or leſs art; thus in the caſe of this wound of Ulyſſes, it is uſed by Homer in a different way: Euryclea, lib. xix. deſcribes it accidentally; Ulyſſes here ſhews it to Eumæus and Philætius voluntarily; and it is certain that all thoſe marks which a poet deſignedly and deliberately uſes to eſtabliſh any verity, have leſs ingenuity than thoſe which produce their effects undeſignedly and caſually, and conſequently the remembrance in the nineteenth Odyſſey is more ingenious than the ſecond diſcovery. The reaſon is, it ſhews no ingenuity to have recourſe to ſuch marks, when we have an intention to make the diſcovery: it cauſes no ſurpriſe nor variety, neither is it produced by any art or invention: on the contrary, the other in the nineteenth book ariſes from the ſubject, and not from the fancy of the poet only. But, ſays Dacier, when Ariſtotle affirms that this preſent remembrance wants ingenuity, we are not yet to imagine that he condemns it; for it is a remembrance made by neceſſity. Ulyſſes has not opportunity to wait till the diſcovery is made accidentally, as in the nineteenth book; he is abſolutely compelled to make it deſignedly, to engage Eumæus and Philætius in his cauſe, by plainly proving to them that he was the real Ulyſſes. If therefore that hero ſhews leſs art in the manner of the remembrance, he ſhews more wiſdom in accommodating his conduct to the opportunity, and uſing the preſent conjuncture ad-

Eager they view'd; with joy they ſtood amaz'd;
With tear-full eyes o'er all their maſter gaz'd:
Around his neck their longing arms they caſt,
His head, his ſhoulders, and his knees embrac'd:
Tears follow'd tears; no word was in their pow'r:
In ſolemn ſilence fell the kindly ſhow'r.
The king too weeps, the king too graſps their hands,
And moveleſs, as a marble fountain, ſtands.
Thus had their joy wept down the ſetting ſun,
But firſt the wiſe man ceas'd and thus begun.
Enough——on other cares your thought employ,
For danger waits on all untimely joy,
Full many foes, and fierce, obſerve us near:
Some may betray, and yonder walls may hear.
Re-enter then, not all at once, but ſtay
Some moments you; and let me lead the way.
To me, neglected as I am, I know
The haughty ſuitors will deny the bow;
But thou, Eumæus, as 'tis borne away,
Thy maſter's weapon to his hand convey.
At ev'ry portal let ſome matron wait,
And each lock faſt the well-compacted gate:
Cloſe let them keep, whate'er invades their ear;
Tho' arms, or ſhouts, or dying groans they hear.
To thy ſtrict charge, Philætius! we conſign
The court's main gate: to guard that paſs be thine.

vantageouſly, to bring about his own re-eſtabliſhment. I will only further obſerve the judgment of Homer in making this diſcovery with the utmoſt brevity, concluding it in the compaſs of two verſes: he had before enlarged upon the wound, and the reader is already fully inſtructed in the ſtory: there is likewiſe another reaſon that requires conciſeneſs; the urgency of the time demands it, for Ulyſſes and Eumæus could not be long in conference without obſervation, and raiſing the jealouſy of the ſuitors.

v. 252. *At ev'ry portal*, &c.] This is a very neceſſary injunction: Ulyſſes fears not only leſt any of the ſuitors ſhould make his eſcape, but alſo leſt any of the women who were friends to the ſuitors ſhould give information to their partiſans abroad, and introduce them to their aſſiſtance. Euſtathius.

This ſaid, he firſt return'd: the faithful ſwains
At diſtance follow, as their king ordains.
Before the flame Eurymachus now ſtands,
And turns the bow, and chafes it with his hands:
Still the tough bow unmov'd. The lofty man
Sigh'd from his mighty ſoul and thus began:
I mourn the common cauſe: for, oh my friends!
On me, on all, what grief, what ſhame attends?
Not the loſt nuptials can affect me more,
(For Greece has beauteous dames on ev'ry ſhore)
But baffled thus! confeſs'd ſo far below
Ulyſſes' ſtrength as not to bend his bow!
How ſhall all ages our attempt deride?
Our weakneſs ſcorn! Antinous thus reply'd.
Not ſo, Eurymachus: that no man draws
The wond'rous bow, attend another cauſe.
Sacred to Phœbus is the ſolemn day,
Which thoughtleſs we in games would waſte away:

v. 266. *Not the loſt nuptials*———] No doubt but Eurymachus miſrepreſents his real ſentiments, when he makes the loſs of Penelope of little importance; but his conduct is an exact picture of human nature: when we have uſed our utmoſt endeavours to obtain our deſires, and have failed in the attempt, the object immediately loſes its value, and we would be thought to deſpiſe it. To be eaſy under any diſappointment is the reſult of reaſon; but to ſeem to deſpiſe what we have been very ſolicitous to obtain, ariſes from the pride of our natures, which perſuades us to endeavour to cheat the world into an opinion that we have not been diſappointed: the remedy for this diſeaſe of our minds, is a regular conduct, and to hold the balance even in all our affairs, that the ſcale be not raiſed too high or depreſſed too low.

v. 274. *Sacred to Phœbus is the ſolemn day.*] Antinous in this reply, ſpeaks, as well as Eurymachus, with diſſimulation; he is unwilling to give a true reaſon, and therefore invents a falſe one: the true reaſon why he defers the tryal of the bow is, becauſe he fears his inability to draw it: the feigned reaſon is a pretended piety paid to the day: it was a day to be obſerved religiouſly, and he inſinuates that all ſports upon it are a profanation of it; and conſequently Apollo being provoked, diſables them from drawing the bow, of which he is the patron. This is the reaſon why he propoſes to offer a libation, to atone for the abuſe of the day by their diverſions. But perhaps the reaſon why Antinous defers the

'Till the next dawn this ill-tim'd ſtrife forego,
And here leave fix'd the ringlets in a row.
Now bid the few'r approach, and let us join
In due libations, and in rites divine,
So end our night: before the day ſhall ſpring,
The choiceſt off'rings let Melanthius bring:
Let then to Phœbus' name the fatted thighs
Feed the rich ſmokes, high-curling to the ſkies.
So ſhall the patron of theſe arts beſtow
(For his the gift) the ſkill to bend the bow.

They heard well-pleas'd: the ready heralds bring
The cleanſing waters from the limpid ſpring:
The goblet high with roſy wine they crown'd,
In order circling to the peers around.
That rite compleat, up-roſe the thoughtful man,
And thus his meditated ſcheme began.

If what I aſk your noble minds approve,
Ye peers and rivals in the royal love!
Chief, if it hurt not great Antinous' ear,
(Whoſe ſage deciſion I with wonder hear)
And if Eurymachus the motion pleaſe;
Give heav'n this day, and reſt the bow in peace.
To-morrow let your arms diſpute the prize,
And take it he, the favour'd of the ſkies!

exerciſe of the bow to the following day, is not becauſe he thought it unlawful to proceed in it, on the feſtival of Apollo; for why ſhould an exerciſe which was inſtituted in honour of that deity, be thought a profanation of the day? I ſhould therefore rather conclude, that the impiety intended by Antinous, was their omiſſion in not offering a ſacrifice to that god before they began the trial, that he might proſper their endeavours: the concluſion of his ſpeech makes this opinion probable: "Let us now defer the experiment, and offer ſacrifice in the morning to Apollo, that he may give us ſucceſs in drawing the bow;" which implies that they were unſucceſsful becauſe they had forgot to ſacrifice. I will only add, that Antinous mentions a goat as an offering to Apollo; we have before ſeen bulls, ſheep and bullocks offered to that deity; the reaſon why a goat is a proper victim, I ſuppoſe is becauſe he is a rural god, and patron of ſhepherds, and therefore all kinds of beaſts were offered to him promiſcuouſly.

But ſince 'till then, this trial you delay,
Truſt it one moment to my hands to day:
Fain would I prove, before your judging eyes,
What once I was, whom wretched you deſpiſe;
If yet this arm its ancient force retain;
Or if my woes (a long-continued train)
And wants and inſults, make me leſs than man?

Rage flaſh'd in light'ning from the ſuitors eyes,
Yet mix'd with terrour at the bold emprize.
Antinous then: O miſerable gueſt!
Is common ſenſe quite baniſh'd from thy breaſt?
Suffic'd it not within the palace plac'd
To ſit diſtinguiſh'd, with our preſence grac'd,
Admitted here with princes to confer,
A man unknown, a needy wanderer?
To copious wine this inſolence we owe,
And much thy betters wine can overthrow:
The great Eurytion when this frenzy ſtung,
Pirithous' roofs with frantic riot rung;

v. 318. *Pirithous' roofs*, &c.] The ſtory of the Centaur is this: Pirithous, a Lapithite, marrying Hippodamia the daughter of Adraſtus, invited the Centaurs and Lapithæ to his nuptials: the Centaurs drinking to great exceſs, and offering violence to the bride, engaged them in a quarrel; Eurytion was the perſon who began the diſorder, and the war that enſued became fatal to the whole nation of the Centaurs. Horace alludes to this hiſtory.

"At ne quis modici tranſiliat munera Liberi,
"Centaurea monet cum Lapithis rixa ſuper mero
"Debellata"——

The Lapithites were a people of Theſſaly inhabiting the mountains Pindus and Othrys; the Centaurs were their neighbours, and dwelt in mount Pelion. This war between the Lapithites and the Centaurs probably laſted about a year: for it began on the day of the nuptials of Pirithous, and on the day that his ſon Polypætes was born, he obtained a deciſive victory over the Centaurs, and drove them from mount Pelion. Thus lib. ii. v. 896. of the Iliad.

Thy troops, Argiſſa, Polypætes leads,
And Eleon, ſhelter'd by Olympus' ſhades;
Sprung from Pirithous of immortal race,
The fruit of fair Hippodame's embrace,
That day when hurl'd from Pelion's cloudy head
To diſtant dens the ſhaggy Centaurs fled.

Boundleſs the Centaur rag'd; 'till one and all
The heroes roſe, and dragg'd him from the hall;
His noſe they ſhorten'd, and his ears they ſlit,
And ſent him ſober'd home, with better wit.
Hence with long war the double race was curſt,
Fatal to all, but to th' aggreſſor firſt.
Such fate I propheſy our gueſt attends,
If here this interdicted bow he bends:
Nor ſhall theſe walls ſuch inſolence contain;
The firſt fair wind tranſports him o'er the main;
Where Echetus to death the guilty brings,
(The worſt of mortals, ev'n the worſt of kings.)
Better than that, if thou approve our chear;
Ceaſe the mad ſtrife, and ſhare our bounty here.
  To this the queen her juſt diſlike expreſt:
'Tis impious, prince! to harm the ſtranger gueſt,
Baſe to inſult who bears a ſuppliant's name,
And ſome reſpect Telemachus may claim.
What if th' immortals on the man beſtow
Sufficient ſtrength to draw the mighty bow?
Shall I, a queen, by rival chiefs ador'd,
Accept a wand'ring ſtranger for my lord?
A hope ſo idle never touch'd his brain:
Then caſe your boſoms of a fear ſo vain.
Far be he baniſh'd from this ſtately ſcene
Who wrongs his princeſs with a thought ſo mean.

This hiſtory is at large related by Ovid, Metam. xii. He calls Eurytion by the name of Eurytus, and deſcribes the nuptial feaſt in a cave, and not in the palace of Pirithous. Thus Mr. Dryden.

In a cool cave's receſs the treat was made,
Whoſe ent'rance trees with ſpreading boughs o'erſhade:
There one more brutal of the brutal brood,
Or whether wine or beauty fir'd his blood,
Or both at once; beheld with luſtful eyes
The bride, at once, reſolv'd to make his prize:
Down went the board; and faſt'ning on her hair
He ſeiz'd with ſudden force the frighted fair;
'Twas Eurytus began. ———

O fair! and wiſeſt of ſo fair a kind:
(Reſpectful thus Eurymachus rejoin'd)
Mov'd by no weak ſurmiſe, but ſenſe of ſhame,
We dread the all-arraigning voice of fame;
We dread the cenſure of the meaneſt ſlave,
The weakeſt woman: all can wrong the brave.
" Behold what wretches to the bed pretend
" Of that brave chief whoſe bow they cou'd not bend!
" In came a beggar of the ſtrolling crew,
" And did what all thoſe princes could not do."
Thus will the common voice our deed defame,
And thus poſterity upbraid our name.

To whom the queen. If fame engage your views,
Forbear thoſe acts which infamy purſues;

v. 357. —— —— *If fame engage your views,*
Forbear thoſe acts which infamy purſues.]

This anſwer of Penelope is very ſevere and very juſt: Eurymachus (obſerves Dacier) had ſaid, If this beggar draws the bow, we ſhall loſe our reputation: Penelope anſwers, It is in vain to be ſolicitous about your reputation, when your lives are a ſeries of infamous actions: fame is the reward of good, and ſhame the portion of baſe and unworthy deeds: it is no diſhonour to a prince to be ſurpaſſed by a beggar in ſtrength, but a prince is more infamous than a beggar, if his actions betray him to be a worſe man; a baſe action ſinks him into contempt, and taints his nobility. The words in Homer are, Τί ἐλεγχέα ταῦτα τιθεῖσθε; which Euſtathius thus explains; Why do you overlook the greater diſhonour, and are thus afraid of trifles? and, adds Dacier, the ſentiment is juſt and happy: theſe princes place diſgrace where it is not; they think it a ſhame to yield in ſtrength to this ſtranger, which is really no ſhame; mere ſtrength is the praiſe of a beaſt, not of a prince: on the contrary, what is really a ſhame, they think to be none; they prey upon a king who was a friend to all mankind; they act a thouſand inſolent and baſe deeds, and yet apprehend no diſcredit. This is an unhappy, and I wiſh it were an unjuſt picture of human nature; we deceive ourſelves with falſe notions both of ſhame and glory, and we may apply the words of Terence to this purpoſe:

—— —— " Hic, ubi opus eſt,
" Non verentur: illic ubi non opus eſt, ibi verentur."

Praiſe is only to be obtained by virtue, and fame is the certain reward of it: ill-nature or envy may eclipſe it, but it will prevail and break out into glory.

Wrong and oppreſſion no renown can raiſe:
Know, friend! that virtue is the path to praiſe.
The ſtature of our gueſt, his port, his face,
Speak him deſcended from no vulgar race.
To him the bow, as he deſires, convey;
And to his hand if Phœbus give the day,
Hence, to reward his merit, he ſhall bear
A two-edg'd falchion and a ſhining ſpear,
Embroider'd ſandals, a rich cloak and veſt,
And ſafe conveyance to his port of reſt.
O royal mother! ever-honour'd name!
Permit me (cries Telemachus) to claim
A ſon's juſt right. No Grecian prince but I
Has pow'r this bow to grant, or to deny.
Of all that Ithaca's rough hills contain,
And all wide Elis' courſer-breeding plain,
To me alone my father's arms deſcend:
And mine alone they are, to give or lend.
Retire, oh queen! thy houſhold taſk reſume,
Tend, with thy maids, the labours of the loom:

v. 377. *Retire, oh queen!* &c.] This ſpeech has been accuſed of too great a liberty, and as wanting in reſpect from a ſon to a mother: Telemachus ſpeaks with authority, when he ought to have ſhewed obedience and filial duty. But theſe critics miſtake the deſign and intention of Telemachus; he ſpeaks directly to Penelope, but obliquely and intentionally to the ſuitors: it is for this reaſon that he ſays he is ſupreme in the palace, viz. to let them know that he will not give up the ſway into their power. He tells Penelope that the bow ſhall be uſed as he directs; this is done to intimidate the ſuitors, and prepare the way for the delivery of it to Ulyſſes, contrary to their injunctions to Eumæus.

The verſes are the ſame with thoſe in the vith of the Iliad. There Hector ſpeaks to Andromache, a tender huſband to a fond wife, and the ſpeech was never taxed with any want of love and kindneſs. In that place Hector remembers that he is an huſband, yet forgets not that he is an hero. In this Telemachus deviates not from the duty of a ſon, yet ſpeaks in the character and ſtyle of a prince.

Euſtathius excellently enlarges upon the words of Telemachus: there is an abſolute neceſſity that Penelope ſhould withdraw, that ſhe might not be preſent at the ſcene of blood and ſlaughter. It is

The bow, the darts, and arms of chivalry,
Theſe cares to man belong, and moſt to me.
Mature beyond his years, the queen admir'd
His ſage reply, and with her train retir'd:
There in her chamber as ſhe ſat apart,
Revolv'd his words, and plac'd them in her heart.
On her Ulyſſes then ſhe fix'd her ſoul,
Down her fair cheek the tears abundant roll,
'Till gentle Pallas, piteous of her cries,
In ſlumber clos'd her ſilver-ſtreaming eyes.
Now thro' the preſs the bow Eumæus bore,
And all was riot, noiſe, and wild uproar.
Hold, lawleſs ruſtic! whither wilt thou go?
To whom, inſenſate, doſt thou bear the bow?
Exil'd for this to ſome ſequeſter'd den,
Far from the ſweet ſociety of men,

for the ſame reaſon that the poet introduces Minerva caſting her into a profound ſleep, that ſhe might be entirely ignorant of the death of the ſuitors: this is abſolutely neceſſary; for if ſhe had been acquainted that Ulyſſes was returned and the ſuitors ſlain by his hand, there could have been no room for the interview between Ulyſſes and Penelope in the ſucceeding parts of the Odyſſey.

But is not Minerva introduced upon too ſmall an occaſion, only to caſt Penelope into a ſlumber? would not nature have worked the ſame effect without the aſſiſtance of the goddeſs? I have already remarked, that machines are not always uſed out of neceſſity, but frequently for ornament, to dignify the poetry and create ſurpriſe by the appearance of a deity. But here the poet brings down Minerva, to give credibility to the ſtory; for though it be true that nature is ſufficient to produce this effect, yet that it ſhould operate in the critical and exact moment, when the poet has occaſion for it, is in ſome degree incredible: the poet therefore to reconcile the relation to probability, introduces a præternatural ſleep, occaſioned by the immediate operation of a goddeſs.

v. 381. ——— *the queen admir'd*
His ſage reply ———]

Penelope is amazed at the free remonſtrance of Telemachus; ſhe is ignorant of the reaſon of it, yet immediately retires, not doubting but his words flowed from a juſt cauſe, and not from a want of filial duty: ſhe is therefore ſaid by the poet to lodge his words in her memory, waiting till time ſhould unfold the myſtery. Dacier.

To thy own dogs a prey thou ſhalt be made;
If heav'n and Phœbus lend the ſuitors aid.
Thus they. Aghaſt he laid the weapon down,
But bold Telemachus thus urg'd him on.
Proceed, falſe ſlave, and ſlight their empty words;
What? hopes the fool to pleaſe ſo many lords?
Young as I am, thy prince's vengeful hand
Stretch'd orth in wrath, ſhall drive thee from the land.
Oh! could the vigour of this arm as well
Th' oppreſſive ſuitors from my walls expel!
Then what a ſhoal of lawleſs men ſhould go
To fill with tumult the dark courts below?
The ſuitors with a ſcornful ſmile ſurvey
The youth, indulging in the genial day.
Eumæus, thus encourag'd, haſtes to bring
The ſtrife-full bow, and gives it to the king.
Old Euryclea calling then aſide,
Hear what Telemachus enjoins (he cry'd)
At ev'ry portal let ſome matron wait,
And each lock faſt the well-compacted gate;

v. 407. *The ſuitors with a ſcornful ſmile*, &c.] Spondanus believes they laugh out of contempt of Telemachus; Dacier, becauſe they believe the time come which is to end all their doubts by the marriage of Penelope; they hope to draw the bow, and this hope mollifies their anger. But all theſe reaſons (as well as thoſe of Euſtathius) ſeem to be rather invented than natural: we may find a ſufficient reaſon of their laughter, from the ſharpneſs of Telemachus towards Eumæus; they rejoice to ſee an enemy (for ſuch they eſteem Eumæus) miſ-uſed, and this will likewiſe give a reaſon why the poet adds, that they ceaſed their anger againſt Telemachus, namely, becauſe he gratifies their ill-will by threatning Eumæus.

v. 412. *Hear what Telemachus enjoins*, &c.] It is very evident that this command proceeds not from Telemachus but Ulyſſes: it was Ulyſſes who gave directions to ſhut the door of the womens apartment; but Eumæus is ignorant that Euryclea was acquainted with the return of Ulyſſes, and therefore ſpeaks as from Telemachus. He knew very well that ſhe would obey the orders of Telemachus, but if ſhe had not been acquainted with the return of Ulyſſes, ſhe would have made ſome heſitation, believing the beggar to be really a ſtranger and not Ulyſſes. Euſtathius.

And if unuſual ſounds invade their ear,
If arms, or ſhouts, or dying groans they hear,
Let none to call or iſſue forth preſume,
But cloſe attend the labours of the loom.
Her prompt obedience on his order waits;
Clos'd in an inſtant were the palace gates.
In the ſame moment forth Philætius flies
Secures the court, and with a cable ties
The utmoſt gate; (the cable ſtrongly wrought
Of Byblos' reed, a ſhip from Ægypt brought)
Then unperceiv'd and ſilent at the board
His ſeat he takes, his eyes upon his lord.
And now his well-known bow the maſter bore,
Turn'd on all ſides, and view'd it o'er and o'er:
Leſt time or worms had done the weapon wrong,
Its owner abſent and untry'd ſo long.

v. 423. ——— *(the cable ſtrongly wrought*
Of Byblos' reed ———]

The word in the Greek is βύβλινον, which we are not to underſtand of the Ægyptian papyrus, but it is derived from βίβλος or βύβλος, a plant growing in the marſhes of Ægypt, βοτάνης ἐυοσερὲς πάπυρῳ, that bears the reſemblance of the papyrus, as Euſtathius explains it. Of this plant the antients made their cordage; on the top of it there grew fibrous threads reſembling hair, and thus Strabo deſcribes it, ψιλὴ ῥάβδος ἐπ' ἄκρᾳ ἔχουσα χαίτην, "a ſlender twig, bearing, as it were, hair on the top of it."

v. 428. *Turn'd on all ſides, and view'd it o'er and o'er.*] This little particularity is not inſerted in vain: Ulyſſes is ready to engage in a terrible combat; it is therefore very neceſſary to be curious in the examination of the bow, to be certain that he might depend upon it: if he had obſerved that it had been decayed through time, his prudence would have furniſhed him with ſome other inſtrument. Euſtathius is of opinion that this whole bow was made of horn, becauſe τῖπες denotes worms that breed in horn: the bow, ſays that author, was made of horn, and not of wood, like the Scythian bows. This, it muſt be confeſſed, is not entirely ſatisfactory, becauſe the bows were antiently tipt or pointed at the extremities with horn; and to this horn Ulyſſes may refer. But the other opinion is moſt probable, and Ovid thus underſtood it:

"Penelope vires juvenum tentabat in arcu,
"Qui latus argueret corneus arcus erat."

While ſome deriding—How he turns the bow!
Some other like it ſure the man muſt know,
Or elſe wou'd copy; or in bows he deals;
Perhaps he makes them, or perhaps he ſteals.—
Heav'n to this wretch (another cry'd) be kind!
And bleſs, in all to which he ſtands inclin'd,
With ſuch good fortune as he now ſhall find.
Heedleſs he heard them; but diſdain'd reply;
The bow peruſing with exacteſt eye.
Then, as ſome heav'nly minſtrel, taught to ſing
High notes reſponſive to the trembling ſtring,
To ſome new ſtrain when he adapts the lyre,
Or the dumb lute refits with vocal wire,
Relaxes, ſtrains, and draws them to and fro;
So the great maſter drew the mighty bow:
And drew with eaſe. One hand aloft diſplay'd
The bending horns, and one the ſtring eſſay'd.
From his eſſaying hand the ſtring let fly
Twang'd ſhort and ſharp, like the ſhrill ſwallow's cry.

v. 440. *Then, as ſome heav'nly minſtrel,* &c.] Euſtathius confeſſes himſelf to be greatly pleaſed with this compariſon: it is very juſt, and well ſuited to the purpoſe; the ſtrings of the lyre repreſent the bow-ſtring, and the eaſe with which the lyriſt ſtretches them, admirably paints the facility with which Ulyſſes draws the bow. When ſimilitudes are borrowed from an object entirely different from the ſubject which they are brought to illuſtrate, they give us a double ſatisfaction, as they ſurpriſe us by ſhewing an agreement between ſuch things in which there ſeems to be the greateſt diſagreement.

v. 448. ——— *the ſtring let fly,*
Twang'd ſhort and ſharp, like the ſhrill ſwallow's cry.]

The compariſon is not intended to repreſent the ſweetneſs of the ſound, but only the quality and nature of it; and means a harſh or jarring ſound, or ſomewhat rough, ὑπότραχυ, as Euſtathius interprets it; ſuch a ſound as the ſwallow makes when ſhe ſings by ſtarts, and not in one even tenour. The ſwallow is inharmonious, and Ariſtophanes uſes χελιδόνων μουσεῖα in his frogs, to ſignify thoſe who are enemies to the muſes; and here the poet uſes it to denote a ſhrill, harſh, or jarring ſound.

A gen'ral horrour ran thro' all the race,
Sunk was each heart, and pale was ev'ry face.
Signs from above enſu'd: th' unfolding ſky
In light'ning burſt; Jove thunder'd from on high.
Fir'd at the call of heav'n's almighty lord,
He ſnatch'd the ſhaft that glitter'd on the board:
(Faſt by, the reſt lay ſleeping in the ſheath,
But ſoon to fly the meſſengers of death.)
Now ſitting as he was, the cord he drew,
Thro' ev'ry ringlet levelling his view;
Then notch'd the ſhaft, releas'd, and gave it wing;
The whizzing arrow vaniſh'd from the ſtring,
Sung on direct, and threaded ev'ry ring.
The ſolid gate its fury ſcarcely bounds;
Pierc'd thro' and thro', the ſolid gate reſounds.
Then to the prince. Nor have I wrought thee ſhame;
Nor err'd this hand unfaithful to its aim;
Nor prov'd the toil too hard; nor have I loſt
That antient vigour, once my pride and boaſt.

v. 452. *Signs from above enſu'd* ——] The ſignal of battle is here given in thunder by Jupiter, as in the eleventh book of the Iliad.

> Ev'n Jove, whoſe thunder ſpoke his wrath, diſtill'd
> Red drops of blood o'er all the fatal field.

And again,

> That inſtant Juno and the martial maid
> In happy thunders promis'd Greece their aid.

This prepares us for the greatneſs of the following action, which is uſhered in with thunder from heaven: and we are not ſurpriſed to ſee Ulyſſes defeat his enemies, when Jupiter declares himſelf in his favour. Homer calls this thunder a ſign and a prodigy: it is a ſign, becauſe it predicts the event; and a prodigy, becauſe the thunder proceeds from a ſerene ſky. Euſtathius.

v. 467. ———— *nor have I loſt*
That antient vigour ——]

Ulyſſes ſpeaks not thus out of vanity, but ſolely to confirm the courage of Telemachus, and his two friends, Eumæus and Philætius. He ſets his vigour before their eyes, that they may have confidence in it in the ſucceeding engagement.

Ill I deſerv'd theſe haughty peers diſdain;
Now let them comfort their dejected train,
In ſweet repaſt the preſent hour employ,
Nor wait 'till ev'ning for the genial joy:
Then to the lute's ſoft voice prolong the night;
Muſic, the banquet's moſt refin'd delight.
He ſaid, then gave a nod; and at the word
Telemachus girds on his ſhining ſword.
Faſt by his father's ſide he takes his ſtand;
The beamy jav'lin lightens in his hand.

v. 471. *In ſweet repaſt the preſent hour employ,*
Nor wait 'till ev'ning ——]

This circumſtance is very neceſſary; Ulyſſes excites the ſuitors to ſupper by day-light, becauſe it would be more eaſy for him to aſſault them while they ſat at table; the poſture would give him ſome advantage; and he adds "before evening," becauſe if they had ſupped by the light of the torch, upon extinguiſhing it, they had greatly embarraſſed him, and perhaps rendered his deſigns ineffectual through the benefit of the darkneſs. Neither is it without reaſon that he propoſes ſinging and muſic; he does it to draw away their thoughts from any jealouſy of intended violence; and by this method he gives the aſſault unexpectedly, and begins the ſlaughter before they are prepared to make any oppoſition.

THE

ODYSSEY.

* BOOK XXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The death of the ſuitors.

Ulyſſes begins the ſlaughter of the ſuitors by the death of Antinous. He declares himſelf, and lets fly his arrows at the reſt. Telemachus aſſiſts, and brings arms for his father, himſelf, Eumæus and Philætius. Melanthius does the ſame for the wooers. Minerva encourages Ulyſſes in the ſhape of Mentor. The ſuitors are all ſlain, only Medon and Phemius are ſpared. Melanthius and the unfaithful ſervants are executed. The reſt acknowledge their maſter with all demonſtrations of joy.

THEN fierce the hero o'er the threſhold ſtrode;
Stript of his rags, he blaz'd out like a god.
Full in their face the lifted bow he bore,
And quiver'd deaths, a formidable ſtore;

* We are now come to the great event or cataſtrophe of the Odyſſey, which is the deſtruction of the ſuitors. The manner by which the poet conducts it, has been praiſed and cenſured by ſome as noble and heroic, by others as romantic and incredible: it is therefore highly neceſſary to vindicate Homer, in the chief action of the whole poem, that he may not be found culpable, in the place where he ought to be the moſt exact, and draw his hero to the beſt advantage. The objection made againſt this deciſive action is, that the poet makes Ulyſſes perform impoſſibilities; no one perſon, with ſuch ſmall aſſiſtance, being able to deſtroy above an hundred enemies. It is no anſwer to ſay that Pallas deſcends to aid Ulyſſes, for it has been already proved, that all incidents which require a divine probability, ſhould be ſo diſengaged from the action, that they may be ſubſtracted from it without deſtroying

Before his feet the rattling ſhow'r he threw,
And thus terrific, to the ſuitor crew.

it; whereas this action is eſſential to it. No leſs a critic than Longinus, chap. vii. condemns Homer; for, enumerating the faults of the Odyſſey, he thus proceeds: to theſe may be added "the abſurdities he commits, in the account of the deſtruction "of Penelope's ſuitors." And Scaliger, lib. v. of his Poetics, is of the ſame opinion: "Ulyſſes interfecit arcu procos, inter "quos & ipſum tantillum eſſet intervalli: quare omnes ſimul in "eum impetum non fecerunt?" The ſtrength of this objection lies in the omiſſion of the ſuitors in not ruſhing at once upon Ulyſſes in an united body: now this was impoſſible, he ſtood upon the threſhold in a narrow paſs, and by this advantage he was able to make it good againſt a great inequality of numbers. It is not difficult to bring inſtances of a like nature from undoubted hiſtory: Cocles alone defended the bridge over the Tyber againſt the whole army of Porſena, and ſtood unmoveable till the Romans broke it down behind him. And Leonidas the Spartan general defended the paſs of Thermopylæ with a ſmall number, againſt three millions of Perſians led by Xerxes; and if he had not been betrayed, he would have probably defeated his whole army. In both theſe inſtances there was a greater inequality of numbers, than between Ulyſſes and the ſuitors. The reader will be reconciled to the probability of theſe relations, if he conſiders that the whole buſineſs of war was antiently decided by mere ſtrength of body: fire-arms now ſet all men upon a nearer level: but in theſe early ages, the ſtrongeſt perſon was the greateſt hero; a man of ſuperior and uncommon ſtrength drove his enemies before him like an army of boys, and with as much facility. From this obſervation it is evident, that Homer ſcarce tranſgreſſes the bounds of hiſtoric truth, when he deſcribes Achilles chaſing whole ſquadrons of Trojans: he wrote according to the manners of his times, and drew after the life, though ſometimes he improved a feature to give grace to the picture of his hero: thus in the ſcripture, from the mere advantage of ſtrength, we ſee a ſingle Goliah defy the whole armies of Iſrael.

Rapin commends the conduct of Homer in bringing about the deſtruction of the ſuitors. The unravelling the whole Odyſſey (ſays that author) by their deaths, is very great, and very becoming an hero; that whole ſtory is dreſſed up in colours ſo decent, and at the ſame time ſo noble, that antiquity can hardly match any part of the narration; here Homer has diſplayed himſelf to the beſt advantage. I wiſh Rapin had given his reaſons, and not run into a general commendation: but we ſhould be ſufficiently convinced of the judgment of Homer in deſcribing the ſuitors falling chiefly by Ulyſſes, if we conſider the nature of epic poetry. The chief action is to be performed by the hero of the poem: thus Hector falls by Achilles, Turnus by Æneas: the death

One vent'rous game this hand has won to-day,
Another, princes! yet remains to play;

of the ſuitors is the chief action of the Odyſſey, and therefore it is neceſſary to be executed by Ulyſſes; for if any other perſon had performed it, that perſon would have done an action more noble than the hero of the poem, and eclipſed his glory. It is for the ſame reaſon that the poet refuſes all eaſy methods to re-eſtabliſh Ulyſſes: he throws him into difficulties which he is to ſurmount by his own proweſs and magnanimity. Homer might eaſily have raiſed an army, and placed Ulyſſes at the head of it; but the more difficult way being moſt conducive to his honour, he rejects all eaſy methods, ſhews him ſtruggling with infinite hazards, out of which he extricates himſelf perſonally by his wiſdom and courage. By this means he compleats the character of his hero, leaves a noble image of his worth upon the minds of the ſpectators, and makes him go off the ſtage with the utmoſt applauſe.

v. 1. *Then fierce the hero o'er the threſhold ſtrode*, &c.] Plato was particularly ſtruck with the beauty of theſe lines: in his dialogue intitled Ion, p. 145. Socrates thus ſpeaks: "When you repeat "the verſes of Homer emphatically, and raviſh the whole audi- "ence, whether it be the paſſage where he ſings how Ulyſſes "leaps upon the threſhold, diſcovers himſelf to the ſuitors; and "pours his arrows before his feet: or where Achilles ruſhes upon "Hector; or where he paints the lamentations of Hecuba, Priam, "or Andromache; tell me, are you any longer maſter of your "own paſſions? Are you not tranſported and raviſhed with divine "fury; think yourſelf preſent at the very actions, either in Ithaca "or Troy? It muſt indeed be allowed, that Homer here paints to the life; we ſee Ulyſſes, his motion, his attitude, and the noble fury with which he begins the onſet. The poet intereſts us in the cauſe of his hero, and we fight on his ſide againſt his enemies.

Euſtathius obſerves, that inſtead of ῥάχῳ the Æolians wrote βράχῳ; an obſervation of too little importance to have been regarded, if he had not given us a fragment of Sappho as a proof of it.

Τὶς δ' ἀγροιώτις θέλγει νοὸν
Οὐκ ἐπισαμένη τὰ βράκεα ἕλκειο
Ἐπὶ τῶν σφυρῶν;

which he thus explains:

What ruſtic beauty dreſs in aukward charms
Detains my lover from his Sappho's arms?

The circumſtance of throwing the arrows before his feet is not inſerted without a reaſon; Ulyſſes could reach them from thence

Another mark our arrow muſt attain.
Phœbus aſſiſt! nor be the labour vain.
Swift as the word the parting arrow ſings,
And bears thy fate, Antinous, on its wings:
Wretch that he was, of unprophetic ſoul!
High in his hands he rear'd the golden bowl!
Ev'n then to drain it lengthen'd out his breath;
Chang'd to the deep, the bitter draught of death:
For fate who fear'd amidſt a feaſtful band?
And fate to numbers, by a ſingle hand?
Full thro' his throat Ulyſſes' weapon paſt,
And pierc'd the neck. He falls, and breathes his laſt.

with more facility and expedition, than if they had hung at his ſhoulder in the quiver.

v. 10. *Phœbus aſſiſt!*————] Ulyſſes addreſſes a prayer to Apollo to give ſucceſs to his preſent enterpriſe; he directs it to him, becauſe he is the god of archery; and he concludes in four words, in compliance with the exigence of the time, which will not permit him to ſpeak at large. This prayer to Apollo confirms my obſervation, that Penelope propoſed the trial of the bow in honour of that deity, and we find that it was cuſtomary from a remarkable paſſage in the Iliad, lib. iv.

> But firſt to ſpeed thy ſhaft, addreſs thy vow
> To Lycian Phœbus with the ſilver bow:
> And ſwear the firſtlings of the flock to pay
> On Zelia's altars, to the god of day.

It is from the urgency of the time that the ſpeech of Ulyſſes, as well as the prayer, is conciſe: it would have been very injudicious when he was ready to aſſault his enemies unexpectedly, to have prefaced the onſet with a long oration; this would have given them an alarm, and time to make an oppoſition.

v. 18. *And fate to numbers, by a ſingle hand?*] This particular is very artful: the poet while he writes, ſeems to be ſurpriſed at the difficulty of the enterpriſe he is about to relate. He is in doubt of the great event, and ſtands ſtill in admiration of it. This has a double effect; it ſets the courage of Ulyſſes in a ſtrong point of light, who executes what might be almoſt thought an impoſſibility: and at the ſame time it excellently contributes to make the ſtory credible; for Homer appears to be held in ſuſpenſe by the greatneſs of the action; an intimation that nothing but the real truth and deference to veracity could extort from him a belief of it: thus by ſeeming to make the relation improbable, the poet eſtabliſhes the probability of it. Euſtathius.

The tumbling goblet the wide floor o'erflows,
A ſtream of gore burſt ſpouting from his noſe;
Grim in convulſive agonies he ſprawls:
Before him ſpurn'd, the loaded table falls,
And ſpreads the pavement with a mingled flood
Of floating meats, and wine, and human blood.
Amaz'd, confounded, as they ſaw him fall,
Uproſe the throngs tumultuous round the hall;
O'er all the dome they caſt a haggard eye,
Each look'd for arms: in vain; no arms were nigh:
Aim'ſt thou at princes? (all amaz'd they ſaid)
Thy laſt of games unhappy haſt thou play'd;
Thy erring ſhaft hath made our braveſt bleed,
And death, unlucky gueſt, attends thy deed.
Vultures ſhall tear thee—Thus incens'd they ſpoke.
While each to chance aſcrib'd the wond'rous ſtroke,

v. 22. *A ſtream of gore burſt ſpouting* ———] The word in the original is αὐλὸς, which commonly ſignifies a pipe or muſical inſtrument: the antients (obſerves Euſtathius) uſed it to denote a fountain; here therefore it implies a flux or fountain of blood; χρυὸς ἐξακόν[ι]σμα αἵμα[τ]ος, the word therefore very happily paints the blood ſpouting from the noſtrils as from a fountain; and in this ſenſe, it gives us a full image of the nature of the wound; the blood ſprung as from a pipe, through the mouth of the wound, or from the veins, through the noſtrils.

v. 35. ——— *Thus incens'd they ſpoke,*
While each to chance aſcrib'd the wond'rous ſtroke.]

This paſſage was looked upon as ſpurious by the antients; for they thought it impoſſible that all the ſuitors ſhould ſpeak the ſame ſentiment, as by compact, like a chorus in a tragedy: they appealed to the cuſtom of Homer himſelf, who continually wrote

Ὣδε τὶς εἰπέσκεν.

Euſtathius anſwers, that the poet ſpeaks thus confuſedly, to repreſent the confuſion of the ſuitors at the death of Antinous. Dacier defends him by ſaying, that all the ſuitors imagined that Antinous was ſlain by accident, and therefore the whole aſſembly having the ſame ſentiment, the poet might aſcribe to every member of it the ſame expreſſion. Either of theſe ſolutions explains the difficulty.

Blind as they were; for death ev'n now invades
His deſtin'd prey, and wraps them all in ſhades.
Then grimly frowning with a dreadful look,
That wither'd all their hearts, Ulyſſes ſpoke.
Dogs, ye have had your day; ye fear'd no more
Ulyſſes vengeful from the Trojan ſhore;
While to your luſt and ſpoil a guardleſs prey,
Our houſe, our wealth, our helpleſs handmaids lay:
Not ſo content, with bolder frenzy fir'd,
Ev'n to our bed preſumptuous you aſpir'd:
Laws or divine or human fail'd to move,
Or ſhame of men, or dread of gods above:
Heedleſs alike of infamy or praiſe,
Or fame's eternal voice in future days:
The hour of vengeance, wretches now is come,
Impending fate is yours, and inſtant doom.
Thus dreadful he. Confus'd the ſuitors ſtood,
From their pale cheeks recedes the flying blood;
Trembling they ſought their guilty heads to hide,
Alone the bold Eurymachus reply'd.
If, as thy words impart, (he thus began)
Ulyſſes lives, and thou the mighty man,
Great are thy wrongs, and much haſt thou ſuſtain'd
In thy ſpoil'd palace, and exhauſted land;
The cauſe and author of thoſe guilty deeds,
Lo! at thy feet unjuſt Antinous bleeds.
Not love, but wild ambition was his guide;
To ſlay thy ſon, thy kingdoms to divide,
Theſe were his aims; but juſter Jove deny'd.

v. 42. *Ulyſſes vengeful from the Trojan ſhore.*] The mention of the return of Ulyſſes from Troy is not inſerted caſually: he ſpeaks thus to intimidate his enemies, by recalling to their minds all the brave actions that he performed before it. Were not this his intention, he would have varied his expreſſion, for in reality he has been abſent from Troy near ten years, and returns from the Phæacian, not the Trojan ſhores. Euſtathius.

v. 64. *To ſlay thy ſon, thy kingdoms to divide.*] This expreſſion is judiciouſly inſerted, and with good reaſon put into the mouth of

Since cold in death th' offender lies; oh ſpare
Thy ſuppliant people, and receive their pray'r!
Braſs, gold, and treaſures ſhall the ſpoil defray,
Two hundred oxen ev'ry prince ſhall pay:
The waſte of years refunded in a day.
Till then thy wrath is juſt—Ulyſſes burn'd
With high diſdain, and ſternly thus return'd.
All, all the treaſures that enrich'd our throne
Before your rapines, join'd with all your own,
If offer'd, vainly ſhould for mercy call;
'Tis you that offer, and I ſcorn them all;
Your blood is my demand, your lives the prize,
'Till pale as yonder wretch each ſuitor lies
Hence with thoſe coward terms; or fight, or fly;
This choice is left ye, to reſiſt or die;

one of the ſuitors, namely Eurymachus. The poet is now puniſhing them for their crimes; it is therefore very neceſſary that the reader ſhould be ſatisfied that they deſerve puniſhment; for if it be not an act of juſtice, it is murder. The poet therefore brings them all confeſſing themſelves guilty by the mouth of Eurymachus; their crime is the intended murder of Telemachus, and the uſurpation of the throne of Ulyſſes. If this had not been ſet in a clear light, there might have been room for a ſuſpicion that Ulyſſes inflicted a puniſhment too great for the guilt of the ſuitors. For was it a crime that deſerved death, to aim at the marriage of Penelope? This is not to be ſuppoſed; for they took her to be a widow, and might therefore without a crime aſk her in marriage. Was death due for the waſte and profuſion of the riches of Ulyſſes? This might have been redreſſed, by a full repayment, and a juſt equivalent. Homer therefore, to ſhew that there is a cauſe for the ſeverity of the puniſhment, ſets their crimes in open view, which are an intentional murder, and an actual treaſon. The place likewiſe where he inſerts this circumſtance is well choſen, viz. in the place where the puniſhment is related; and by this method we acknowledge the equity of it. It is true; Eurymachus throws the guilt upon Antinous as the chief offender; but all the ſuitors have been his aſſociates, and approved of all his violent and bloody deſigns through the Odyſſey, and therefore are juſtly involved in the ſame puniſhment i ſo that Ulyſſes puniſhes rebellious ſubjects by the authority of a king. Homer likewiſe obſerves juſtice in the death of Antinous; he is the firſt in guilt, and the firſt that falls by his hero's hands.

And die I truſt ye ſhall.—He ſternly ſpoke:
With guilty fears the pale aſſembly ſhook.
Alone Eurymachus exhorts the train:
Yon' archer, comrades, will not ſhoot in vain;
But from the threſhold ſhall his darts be ſped,
(Who-e'er he be) 'till ev'ry prince lie dead.
Be mindful of yourſelves, draw forth your ſwords,
And to his ſhafts obtend theſe ample boards,
(So need compels.) Then, all united ſtrive
The bold invader from his poſt to drive;
The city rous'd ſhall to our reſcue haſte,
And this mad archer ſoon have ſhot his laſt.
Swift as he ſpoke, he drew his traitor ſword,
And like a lion ruſh'd againſt his lord:
The wary chief the ruſhing foe repreſt,
Who met the point, and forc'd it in his breaſt:
His failing hand deſerts the lifted ſword,
And prone he falls extended o'er the board!
Before him wide, in mix'd effuſion roll
Th' untaſted viands, and the jovial bowl.
Full thro' his liver paſs'd the mortal wound,
With dying rage his forehead beats the ground,
He ſpurn'd the ſeat with fury as he fell,
And the fierce ſoul to darkneſs div'd, and hell.

v. 88. *And to his ſhafts obtend theſe ample boards.*] Eurymachus exhorts the ſuitors to make uſe of the tables to oppoſe Ulyſſes in the manner of ſhields; from whence, obſerves Euſtathius, it may be gathered that every ſuitor had a peculiar table. This may be confirmed from this book; for when Antinous falls, he overturns a table; which, if there had been but one, would have been too large to be thus overthrown; beſides he ſpeaks in the plural number, τραπέζας.

v. 91. *The city rous'd ſhall to our reſcue haſte.*] It is impoſſible but that the ſuitors muſt have many friends amongſt the Ithacans. Intereſt or ill-humour engages men in faction; but this is not the full import of the ſenſe of Homer: the Ithacans were ignorant that Ulyſſes was returned, and no wonder therefore if they engaged in defence of the princes of their land, againſt a ſtranger and a beggar; for ſuch in appearance was Ulyſſes.

Next bold Amphinomus his arms extends
To force the paſs: the god-like man defends.
Thy ſpear, Telemachus! prevents th' attack,
The brazen weapon driving thro' his back,
Thence thro' his breaſt its bloody paſſage tore;
Flat falls he thund'ring on the marble floor,
And his cruſh'd forehead marks the ſtone with gore.
He left his jav'lin in the dead, for fear
The long incumbrance of the weighty ſpear
To the fierce foe advantage might afford,
To ruſh between and uſe the ſhorten'd ſword.
With ſpeedy ardour to his ſire he flies,
And, Arm, great father! arm (in haſte he cries)

v. 108. *The brazen weapon driving thro' his back.*] Euſtathius, and Spondanus from him, interpret this paſſage very much to the diſadvantage of the courage of Telemachus; they obſerve that he is yet new to the horrours of war, and therefore wanting the heart to meet his enemy in the front, gives him this wound between the ſhoulders: that as ſoon as he has given the blow, out of fear he leaves the ſpear in the wound; an action as diſreputable as to throw away the ſhield in battle; and laſtly, that it is fear that ſuggeſts to his mind the expedient to fetch the arms, a pretext to be diſtant from danger. But it is not difficult to defend Telemachus. Amphinomus was aſſaulting Ulyſſes, and conſequently his back was turned towards Telemachus, and this occaſions the wound in that part. This combat is not a combat of honour, where points of ceremony are obſerved: Telemachus was therefore at liberty to deſtroy his enemy by any methods, without any imputation of cowardice; eſpecially conſidering the inequality of the parties. Neither is it out of fear that he quits his ſpear; but from a dictate of wiſdom: he is afraid leſt ſome of the ſuitors ſhould attack him while he is diſengaging it, and take him at an advantage, while he has no weapon to uſe in his own defence; beſides, he has no farther occaſion for it; he haſtes away to provide other arms, not only for himſelf, but for Ulyſſes and his friends; and this is ſo far from being the ſuggeſtion of fear, that it is the reſult of wiſdom.

There is ſome difficulty in the expreſſion προπρήνεϊ τύψας, the meaning of it is, leſt he ſhould receive a deſcending blow: the word is an adjective, and Euſtathius tells us, that χειρὶ is to be underſtood; I ſhould rather chuſe σαγάνῳ which immediately precedes, it being as good ſenſe to ſay a wound is given by a deſcending ſword, as a deſcending hand.

v. 117. ——— *arm (in haſte he cries).*] Homer almoſt con-

Lo hence I run for other arms to wield,
For miſſile jav'lins, and for helm and ſhield;
Faſt by our ſide let either faithful ſwain
In arms attend us, and their part ſuſtain.
Haſte and return (Ulyſſes made reply)
While yet th' auxiliar ſhafts this hand ſupply;
Leſt thus alone, encounter'd by an hoſt,
Driv'n from the gate, th' important paſs be loſt.
With ſpeed Telemachus obeys, and flies
Where pil'd on heaps the royal armour lies;
Four brazen helmets, eight refulgent ſpears,
And four broad bucklers, to his ſire he bears:
At once in brazen panoply they ſhone,
At once each ſervant brac'd his armour on;
Around their king a faithful guard they ſtand,
While yet each ſhaft flew deathful from his hand:
Chief after chief expir'd at ev'ry wound,
And ſwell'd the bleeding mountain on the ground.
Soon as his ſtore of flying fates was ſpent,
Againſt the wall he ſet the bow unbent:

ſtantly gives the epithet πτερόεντα to ἔπεα; "winged words." Plutarch in his treatiſe upon Garrulity gives us the meaning of it. A word (ſays that author) while it remains unſpoken is a ſecret, but being communicated, it changes its name into common rumour; it is then "flown" from us; and this is the reaſon why Homer calls words "winged:" he that lets a bird fly from his hand, does not eaſily catch it again; and he that lets a word ſlip from his tongue cannot recall it; it flies abroad, and flutters from place to place every moment. It has indeed in ſome paſſages a ſtill cloſer meaning; when a perſon ſpeaks with precipitation, the epithet expreſſes the ſwiftneſs of the ſpeech, the words are winged: it is here applied with particular propriety; Telemachus aſks a queſtion in the compaſs of four lines, and receives an anſwer in two from Ulyſſes; the time not allowing any delay.

v. 137. *Againſt the wall he ſet the bow unbent.*] The poet may be thought too circumſtantial in the diſpoſal of the bow; but there is a reaſon for it; he ſhews Ulyſſes placed it out of the reach of the ſuitors, who, if they had ſeized the bow, might have furniſhed themſelves with arrows from the dead bodies of their friends, and employed them againſt Ulyſſes: this caution was therefore neceſſary. Euſtathius.

And now his ſhoulders bear the maſſy ſhield,
And now his hands two beamy jav'lins wield:
He frowns beneath his nodding plume, that play'd
O'er the high creſt, and caſt a dreadful ſhade.
There ſtood a window near, whence looking down
From o'er the porch, appear'd the ſubject town.

v. 142. *There ſtood a window near, whence looking down*
From o'er the porch, appear'd the ſubject town.]

The word in the Greek is ὀρσοθύρη, "janua ſuperior," and it is likewiſe uſed a little lower. It has given great trouble to the commentators to explain the ſituation of theſe two paſſages. Dacier imagines that by the former there was a deſcent into the court-yard, and ſo to the ſtreet; but this cannot be true: for Agelaus exhorting his aſſociates to ſeize this paſſage, makes uſe of the word ἀναβαίνω, which ſignifies to "aſcend," and not to "deſcend" into the court-yard: beſides, he bids them raiſe the people by "ſhouting to them," which ſeems to imply, that this place overlooked the ſtreets, from whence a ſhout might be heard by the people. Ὀρσοθύρη (obſerves Euſtathius) is θύρη εἰς ἣν ὀρνύσαι τὶς θέλων ἰδεῖν ἐκεῖθεν, that is, "a door by which a perſon aſcends "to obtain a proſpect." This probably led to the roof of the porch of the palace fronting the ſtreet, from whence a perſon ſtanding in the open air, and ſhouting, might raiſe the city; or as for greater clearneſs it is here tranſlated a window, which anſwers all theſe purpoſes.

But there is ſtill a difficulty ariſing from the word λαύρην, which is thus ſolved by Euſtathius, λαύρη ἐστὶν ὁ πρὸς τὴν ὀρσοθύρην ἄγων στενωπὸς, that is, a narrow paſſage leading to this private window or door, and he afterwards interprets it by στενὴ ὁδὸς.

From what has been obſerved, it appears evidently that there was another paſſage to the upper apartments of the palace; for this was guarded by Eumæus, and was inacceſſible, and conſequently Melanthius conveys the arms to the ſuitors by ſome other ſtair-caſe. This Homer expreſſes by ἀναῤῥῴγας μεγάροιο; the former word is very well explained by Heſychius, it ſignifies the paſſages of the palace leading from chamber to chamber, or the διοδοὶ of the apartments. Ῥωγὴ properly denotes a rupture, and here repreſents the openings of the paſſages from room to room. The antients thought this whole paſſage ſo obſcure, that they drew a plan of theſe inward paſſages of the palace, as Euſtathius informs us; in this they figured the porch, the higher aperture, the other ſtair-caſe, and the room where the arms were laid. But Dacier ſtarts another difficulty: if Melanthius could go up to the room where the arms lay, why could he not go from thence into the courts of the palace, and raiſe the city? The anſwer is, becauſe the arms were placed in an inward apartment, and there was no

A double ſtrength of valves ſecur'd the place,
A high and narrow, but the only paſs:
The cautious king, with all preventing care,
To guard that outlet, plac'd Eumæus there:
When Agelaüs thus: Has none the ſenſe
To mount yon' window, and alarm from thence
The neighbour town? the town ſhall force the door,
And this bold archer ſoon ſhall ſhoot no more.
Melanthius then: That outlet to the gate
So near adjoins, that one may guard the ſtraight.
But other methods of defence remain,
Myſelf with arms can furniſh all the train;
Stores from the royal magazine I bring,
And their own darts ſhall pierce the prince and king.
He ſaid; and mounting up the lofty ſtairs,
Twelve ſhields, twelve lances, and twelve helmets bears:
All arm, and ſudden round the hall appears
A blaze of bucklers, and a wood of ſpears.
The hero ſtands oppreſt with mighty woe,
On ev'ry ſide he ſees the labour grow:
Oh curſt event! and oh unlook'd-for aid!
Melanthius or the women have betray'd——

paſſage from thence into the palace-yards. Her miſtake aroſe from her opinion that there was an entry into the palace by the ὀρσοθύρη, which opinion is refuted in the beginning of this annotation. If indeed Telemachus had brought down the arms this way, then there muſt have been a paſſage for Melanthius to the place from whence Agelaus bids him raiſe the city; for if Telemachus had paſſed to the armoury by it, why might not Melanthius from it? But this is not the caſe; for this door or window is not mentioned till Telemachus has furniſhed Ulyſſes and his friends with armour; and conſequently Homer cannot intend that we ſhould underſtand that Telemachus aſcended to the armoury by it.

v. 159. *Twelve ſhields, twelve lances, and twelve helmets bears.*] Ariſtarchus, remarks Euſtathius, blamed this deſcription as incredible; for how could one perſon be able to carry ſuch a load of armour at one time? But we are not to make this ſuppoſition; the poet ſpeaks indefinitely, and leaves us at liberty to conjecture that Melanthius brought them at ſeveral times; thus a little lower we find him going again for arms to furniſh the reſt of the ſuitors.

Oh my dear ſon!——The father with a ſigh!
Then ceas'd: the filial virtue made reply.
Falſhood is folly, and 'tis juſt to own
The fault committed; this was mine alone;
My haſte neglected yonder door to bar,
And hence the villain has ſupply'd their war.
Run, good Eumæus, then, and (what before
I thoughtleſs err'd in) well ſecure that door:
Learn if by female fraud this deed were done,
Or (as my thought miſgives) by Dolius' ſon.
While yet they ſpoke, in queſt of arms again
To the high chamber ſtole the faithleſs ſwain,
Not unobſerv'd. Eumæus watchful ey'd,
And thus addreſs'd Ulyſſes near his ſide.
The miſcreant we ſuſpected takes that way;
Him, if this arm be pow'rful, ſhall I ſlay?
Or drive him hither, to receive the meed
From thy own hand, of this deteſted deed?

v. 172. *Run, good Eumæus*, &c.] This paſſage, where Telemachus bids Eumæus go and ſee who brings the arms, proves that Telemachus did not before abſent himſelf from the battle out of cowardice: here he chuſes to partake the danger with Ulyſſes, and ſends Eumæus and Philætius to execute his orders; a ſign that he does not conſult his ſafety at the expence of his honour. Euſtathius.

But it may ſeem extraordinary, that Ulyſſes and Telemachus ſhould be in doubt to know the perſon who brought the arms to the ſuitors; eſpecially when Agelaus had held a public conference with Melanthius in order to it; but, anſwers Euſtathius, they ſpoke with a low voice, and at a proper diſtance from Ulyſſes. It may alſo be objected, that Melanthius could not poſſibly bring the arms without the obſervation of Ulyſſes and his friends. To ſolve this difficulty we muſt have recourſe to the ſecond private door, or ὀρσοθύρη, mentioned in a former annotation: by this paſſage he aſcends and deſcends without a diſcovery; that paſſage ſtanding in ſuch a ſituation, as not to be viſible to thoſe who were on the oppoſite ſide of the palace. What may ſeem to contradict this obſervation is, what Homer afterwards adds, for he directly tells us, tha Eumæus obſerved that the perſon who brought the arms was Melanthius; but that expreſſion may only imply, that he ſaw Melanthius going from the reſt of the company, and haſting towards that aſcent, and therefore juſtly concludes him to be the perſon.

Not ſo (reply'd Ulyſſes) leave him there,
For us ſufficient is another care:
Within the ſtricture of this palace wall
To keep inclos'd his maſters 'till they fall.
Go you and ſeize the felon; backward bind
His arms and legs, and fix a plank behind;
On this, his body by ſtrong cords extend,
And on a column near the roof ſuſpend;
So ſtudy'd tortures his vile days ſhall end.
The ready ſwains obey'd with joyful haſte,
Behind the felon unperceiv'd they paſt,
As round the room in queſt of arms he goes:
(The half-ſhut door conceal'd his lurking foes)
One hand ſuſtain'd a helm, and one the ſhield
Which old Laertes wont in youth to wield,
Cover'd with duſt, with dryneſs chapt and worn,
The braſs corroded, and the leather torn:

v. 187. *To keep inclos'd his maſters*————] It may be aſked, when Eumæus retires from the guard of the paſſage, what hinders the ſuitors from ſeizing it, and by it giving notice to the city of their danger? What Ulyſſes here ſays obviates this objection. He tells Eumæus, that he and Telemachus will defend it againſt all the efforts of his enemies: by this expreſſion he gives us to underſtand, that Telemachus ſhall poſt himſelf in the place of Eumæus, and make it good till he has executed juſtice upon Melanthius.

v. 197. *One hand ſuſtain'd a helm, and one the ſhield.*] We ſee Melanthius after a diligent ſearch finds only one helm and one ſhield; and the ſhield is deſcribed as almoſt ſpoiled with age: from hence Euſtathius gathers that there were no more left in the armoury; for it is probable that Melanthius would not have returned with ſo few arms if he could have found more: nor would he have brought the decayed ſhield, if he could have ſupplied himſelf with a ſtronger; ſo that all the arms of Ulyſſes were ſeventeen helmets twelve at firſt delivered to the ſuitors by Melanthius, one more he was now bringing, and Ulyſſes and his friends were in poſſeſſion of four: there were the ſame number of ſhields, and twenty ſpears, twelve given to the ſuitors, and eight to the aſſiſtants of Ulyſſes. This was his private armoury for the defence of his palace: and we are not to conclude, that theſe were the whole arms of the nation; there probably was a public repoſitory for armour for the public uſe of their armies againſt their enemies.

Thus laden, o'er the threſhold as he ſtept,
Fierce on the villain from each ſide they leapt,
Back by the hair the trembling daſtard drew,
And down reluctant on the pavement threw.
Active and pleas'd, the zealous ſwains fulfil
At ev'ry point their maſter's rigid will:
Firſt, faſt behind, his hands and feet they bound,
Then ſtreighten'd cords involv'd his body round:
So drawn aloft, athwart the column ty'd,
The howling felon ſwung from ſide to ſide.
Eumæus ſcoffing then with keen diſdain:
There paſs thy pleaſing night, oh gentle ſwain!
On that ſoft pillow, from that envy'd height
Firſt may'ſt thou ſee the ſpringing dawn of light;
So timely riſe, when morning ſtreaks the eaſt,
To drive thy victims to the ſuitors feaſt.
This ſaid, they left him tortur'd as he lay,
Secur'd the door, and haſty ſtrode away:
Each, breathing death, reſum'd his dang'rous poſt
Near great Ulyſſes; four againſt an hoſt.
When lo! deſcending to her hero's aid
Jove's daughter Pallas, war's triumphant maid:
In Mentor's friendly form ſhe join'd his ſide;
Ulyſſes ſaw, and thus with tranſport cry'd.
Come, ever welcome, and thy ſuccour lend;
Oh ev'ry ſacred name in one! my friend!
Early we lov'd, and long our loves have grown:
Whate'er thro' life's whole ſeries I have done
Or good, or grateful, now to mind recall,
And aiding this one hour, repay it all.
Thus he; but pleaſing hopes his boſom warm
Of Pallas latent in the friendly form.
The adverſe hoſt the phantom warriour ey'd,
And firſt loud threat'ning, Agelaus cry'd.
Mentor beware, nor let that tongue perſuade
Thy frantic arm to lend Ulyſſes aid;

Our force ſucceſsful ſhall our threat make good,
And with the ſire's and ſon's commix thy blood.
What hop'ſt thou here? Thee firſt the ſword ſhall ſlay,
Then lop thy whole poſterity away;
Far hence thy baniſh'd conſort ſhall we ſend;
With his, thy forfeit lands and treaſures blend;
Thus, and thus only, ſhalt thou join thy friend.
His barb'rous inſult ev'n the goddeſs fires,
Who thus the warriour to revenge inſpires.
Art thou Ulyſſes? where then ſhall we find
The patient body and the conſtant mind?
That courage, once the Trojans daily dread,
Known nine long years, and felt by heroes dead?
And where that conduct, which reveng'd the luſt
Of Priam's race, and laid proud Troy in duſt?
If this, when Helen was the cauſe, were done;
What for thy country now, thy queen, thy ſon?
Riſe then in combat, at my ſide attend;
Obſerve what vigour gratitude can lend,
And foes how weak, oppos'd againſt a friend!

v. 246. *Art thou Ulyſſes?* &c.] Pallas is here an allegorical deity, and repreſents the courage and wiſdom which was exerted by Ulyſſes in the deſtruction of the ſuitors: the poet puts the words into the mouth of a goddeſs, to give ornament and dignity to his poetry; but they are only the ſuggeſtions of his own heart, which reproaches him for being ſo ſlow in puniſhing the inſolence of his adverſaries. If we take them in this ſenſe they will be in the nature of a ſoliloquy: the poet indeed was obliged to introduce a deity, to give importance to the deciſive action of his whole poem: thus Jupiter aſſiſts Æneas in Virgil; Minerva, Achilles in the Iliad, and the ſame goddeſs Ulyſſes here in the Odyſſey. I very well know that all theſe paſſages have been blamed by ſome critics, as derogatory to the courage of theſe heroes, who cannot conquer their enemies but through the aſſiſtance of a deity. The reader may be pleaſed to look back for a full vindication of Homer and Virgil, to lib. iii. note on v. 481. of the Odyſſey.

We may obſerve that a deity deſcends to aſſiſt Ulyſſes, but that the ſuitors are left to their own conduct: this furniſhes us with a very juſt and pious moral, and teaches us that heaven guards and aſſiſts good men in adverſity, but abandons the wicked, and lets them periſh for their follies.

She ſpoke; but willing longer to ſurvey
The ſire and ſon's great acts, with-held the day;
By farther toils decreed the brave to try,
And level pois'd the wings of victory:
Then with a change of form eludes their ſight,
Perch'd like a ſwallow on a rafter's height,
And unperceiv'd, enjoys the riſing ſight.
Damaſtor's ſon, bold Agelaüs, leads
The guilty war; Eurynomus ſucceeds;
With theſe, Piſander great Polyctor's ſon,
Sage Polybus, and ſtern Amphimedon,
With Demoptolemus: theſe ſix ſurvive;
The beſt of all, the ſhafts had left alive.
Amidſt the carnage deſp'rate as they ſtand,
Thus Agelaüs rous'd the lagging band.
The hour is come, when yon' fierce man no more
With bleeding princes ſhall beſtrow the floor:
Lo! Mentor leaves him with an empty boaſt;
The four remain, but four againſt an hoſt.
Let each at once diſcharge the deadly dart,
One ſure of ſix ſhall reach Ulyſſes' heart:

v. 262. *Perch'd like a ſwallow* ———] We have ſeen the deities, both in the Iliad and Odyſſey, changing themſelves into the ſhape of birds: thus lib. vii. v. 67. of the Iliad,

Th' Athenian maid, and glorious god of day
With ſilent joy the ſettling hoſts ſurvey,
In form like vultures, on the beech's height
They ſit conceal'd, and wait the future fight.

This perhaps may be the occaſion of all ſuch fictions. The ſuperſtition of the heathen world induced the antients to believe that the appearance of any bird in a critical hour was a ſign of the preſence of a divinity, and by degrees they began to perſuade themſelves, that the gods appeared to them in the form of thoſe birds. Hence aroſe all the honours paid to augurs, and the reliance upon divination drawn from the flight of birds; and almoſt every deity had a bird ſacred to him. The eagle to Jupiter, the peacock to Juno, &c. Pallas here takes the form of a ſwallow, becauſe it is a domeſtic bird, and therefore may be ſaid to appear within the walls of the palace with moſt probability.

Thus ſhall one ſtroke the glory loſt regain:
The reſt muſt periſh, their great leader ſlain.
Then all at once their mingled lances threw,
And thirſty all of one man's blood they flew;
In vain! Minerva turn'd them with her breath,
And ſcatter'd ſhort, or wide the points of death;
With deaden'd ſound, one on the threſhold falls,
One ſtrikes the gate, one rings againſt the walls;
The ſtorm paſt innocent. The god-like man
Now loftier trod, and dreadful thus began.
'Tis now (brave friends) our turn, at once to throw
(So ſpeed 'em heav'n) our jav'lins at the foe.
That impious race to all their paſt miſdeeds
Would add our blood. Injuſtice ſtill proceeds.
He ſpoke: at once their fiery lances flew:
Great Demoptolemus, Ulyſſes ſlew;
Euryades receiv'd the prince's dart;
The goat-herd's quiver'd in Piſander's heart;
Fierce Elatus by thine, Eumæus, falls;
Their fall in thunder echoes round the walls.
The reſt retreat: the victors now advance,
Each from the dead reſumes his bloody lance.
Again the foe diſcharge the ſteely ſhow'r;
Again made fruſtrate by the virgin pow'r.
Some, turn'd by Pallas, on the threſhold fall,
Some wound the gate, ſome ring againſt the wall;
Some weak, or pond'rous with the brazen head,
Drop harmleſs, on the pavement ſounding dead.

v. 298. ——— *the victors now advance,*
Each from the dead reſumes his bloody lance.]

The danger beginning to abate by the fall of the chief of the enemy, Ulyſſes advances from his ſtand: there was a neceſſity for this conduct: Ulyſſes and his three aſſiſtants had killed four enemies with their ſpears: and conſequently the poet was obliged to ſupply them with freſh weapons, otherwiſe, if they had diſcharged their ſpears once more, they muſt have been left naked and defenceleſs, having only two a-piece brought by Telemachus. This obſervation ſhews the exactneſs which Homer maintains in his relation.

Then bold Amphimedon his jav'lin caſt;
Thy hand, Telemachus, it lightly raz'd:
And from Cteſippus' arm the ſpear elanc'd
On good Eumæus' ſhield and ſhoulder glanc'd;
Not leſſen'd of their force (ſo ſlight the wound)
Each ſung along, and dropp'd upon the ground.
Fate doom'd thee next, Eurydamus, to bear
Thy death, ennobl'd by Ulyſſes' ſpear.
By the bold ſon Amphimedon was ſlain:
And Polybus renown'd the faithful ſwain.
Pierc'd thro' the breaſt the rude Cteſippus bled,
And thus Philætius gloried o'er the dead.

There end thy pompous vaunts and high diſdain;
Oh ſharp in ſcandal, voluble and vain!
How weak is mortal pride! To heav'n alone
Th' event of actions and our fates are known:
Scoffer, behold what gratitude we bear:
The victim's heel is anſwer'd with this ſpear.

Ulyſſes brandiſh'd high his vengeful ſteel,
And Damaſtorides that inſtant fell;
Faſt-by Leocritus expiring lay,
The prince's jav'lin tore its bloody way
Thro' all his bowels: down he tumbles prone,
His batter'd front and brains beſmear the ſtone.

v. 323. *The victim's heel is anſwer'd with this ſpear.*] This refers to a paſſage in the latter end of the twentieth book of the Odyſſey, where Cteſippus throws the foot of a bullock at Ulyſſes. Philætius here gives him a mortal wound with his ſpear, and tells him it is a return for the foot of the bullock. Euſtathius informs us, that this became a proverb, τοῦτο τὸ ἀντὶ ποδὸς ξεινήϊον, to expreſs a return of evil for evil; the like may be obſerved of the death of Antinous, who was killed as he lifted the bowl to drink.

Πολλὰ μεταξὺ πέλει κύλικος καὶ χείλεος ἄκρου.

Which is exactly rendered by our proverb, "Many things happen "between the cup and the lip." Thus likewiſe the kindneſs of Cyclops was uſed proverbially, to denote a ſevere injury diſguiſed under a ſeeming civility; that monſter having promiſed Ulyſſes mercy, but it was only the mercy to devour him laſt. Theſe little inſtances prove the great veneration the antients had for Homer.

Now Pallas ſhines confeſs'd; aloft ſhe ſpreads
The arm of vengeance o'er their guilty heads;
The dreadful ægis blazes in their eye;
Amaz'd they ſee, they tremble, and they fly:
Confus'd, diſtracted, thro' the rooms they fling,
Like oxen madden'd by the breeſe's ſting,
When ſultry days, and long, ſucceed the gentle ſpring.

v. 332. *The dreadful ægis* ——— ——] This ſhield is at large deſcribed, lib. v. of the Iliad.

——— round the margin roll'd,
A fringe of ſerpents, hiſſing, guard the gold:
Here all the terrours of grim war appear;
Here rages force, here tremble flight and fear;
Here ſtorm'd contention, and here fury frown'd,
And the dire orb portentous Gorgon crown'd.

We ſee the terrible effects which the ſhield cauſes are created by the poet into a kind of beings, and animated to fight on the ſide of his hero.

v. 335. *Like oxen*, &c.] The fury of the battle being now over, Homer pauſes with the action; and letting his fancy rove in ſearch of foreign ornaments, beautifies and enlivens the horrours of it with two ſimilitudes, drawn from ſubjects very diſtant from the terrours they are brought to illuſtrate. The former of an herd of cattle, repreſents the confuſion and affright of the ſuitors; the latter of the birds, their weakneſs and unavailing flight. The gadfly ſhews the fury and cloſe purſuit of Ulyſſes and his aſſiſtants, the hawks their courage, and ſuperiour power. Euſtathius. Virgil at large deſcribes this breeſe-fly. Georg. iii.

About th' Alburnian groves, with holly green,
Of winged inſects mighty ſwarms are ſeen:
This flying plague, to mark its quality,
Oeſtros the Grecians call, Aſilus, we:
A fierce loud buzzing breeſe: their ſtings draw blood:
And drive the cattle gadding thro' the wood,
Seiz'd with unuſual pains they loudly cry, &c. Dryden.

This deſcription ſhews that it is no ill-choſen ſimilitude; it very well paints the ſuitors flying in an herd, and Ulyſſes wounding them as they fly.

The latter ſimile from the hawks, affords ſome curioſity in regard to the ancient manner of that ſport. It is evident, ſays Dacier, that this paſſage is an inſtance that flying birds of prey, in the nature of our hawking, was practiſed by the ancients: the nets, called by Homer νέφεα, were fixed in the plain ground; the fowlers with their falcons took their ſtation upon the adjoining eminences; when the birds, driven from this riſing ground, flew to the plain, they met with the nets, and endeavouring to eſcape

Not half ſo keen, fierce vultures of the chace
Stoop from the mountains on the feather'd race,
When, the wide field extended ſnares beſet,
With conſcious dread they ſhun the quiv'ring net:
No help, no flight: but wounded ev'ry way,
Headlong they drop: the fowlers ſeize the prey.

them, crowded into flocks: then the hawk or vulture was looſed, and deſcending upon his prey, ſlew them in multitudes; for the birds were incapable of reſiſting, and at the ſame time were afraid of the nets, and therefore could not eſcape: this is the reaſon why the fowlers are ſaid to rejoice at the ſport: a plain indication that the poet intended to deſcribe the ſportſman's flying his bird at the prey. That the word νέφεα ſignifies "nets," is evident from Ariſtophanes, μὰ νεφέλας, μὰ δ᾽ἰκτυα, that is, "I ſwear by my nets:" Heſychius is of the ſame opinion, νέφεα, ſays that author, ſignifies the "clouds," καὶ λίνα θηρατικὰ, "hunters nets." Euſtathius directly affirms, that in his time this ſport was practiſed in many countries; and the place where the nets were fixed was called νεφελοσασία. That author conſtrues theſe words νέφεα πωσσεσθαι ἰενται, as if ἐπι were to be underſtood, to expreſs the ruſhing of the birds againſt the net; but there is no occaſion for this violence to the text, for by joining νέφεα, with πωσσεσθαι, the period will be plain, and ſignify, that through fear of the net they fly with violence to avoid it. Monſieur Dacier has a pretty obſervation upon this ſport; and ſhews us that the antients were uſed to take even deer with nets, by flying at them birds of prey, in conformity to this deſcription of Homer: this is manifeſt from a paſſage in Arrian, lib. ii. c. 1. where he ſpeaks of men placing their fears where they have nothing to fear: Λοιπὸν, ἡμεῖς τὸ τῶν ἐλάφων πάσχομεν· ὅτε φοβοῦνται φεύγεσαι αἱ ἔλαφοι τὰ πτηνὰ, πὸ τρέπονται; ἢ πρὸς τινὰ (τόπον) ἀναχωροῦσιν ὡς ἀσφαλῆ; πρὸς τὰ δίκτυα, καὶ ὅτως ἀπόλλυνται, ἐναλλάξασαι τὰ φοβερὰ τὰ θαρραλέα "For what remains, we "are like deer, for they fearing the birds that are flown at them, "what courſe do they take? To what place of refuge do they run "to be in ſecurity? To the nets, and ſo periſh, miſtaking their "danger for their greateſt ſafety." Minerva, in this ſimilitude, is the bird of prey deſcending from the mountain; for ſhe it is who ſcatters the ſuitors by diſplaying her ægis from the roof of the palace: this is the opinion of Euſtathius: but in the winding up of the compariſon, Homer plainly by the vulture denotes Ulyſſes and his aſſiſtants (though perhaps not excluſively of the goddeſs) for in the application he writes:

Ὣς ἄρα τοὶ μνηςῆρας ἐπεσσύμενοι κατὰ δῶμα
Τύπτον. —— ——

On all ſides thus they double wound on wound,
In proſtrate heaps the wretches beat the ground,
Unmanly ſhrieks precede each dying groan,
And a red deluge floats the reeking ſtone.
Leiodes firſt before the victor falls:
The wretched augur thus for mercy calls.
O gracious hear, nor let thy ſuppliant bleed:
Still undiſhonour'd or by word or deed
Thy houſe, for me, remains; by me repreſs'd
Full oft' was check'd th' injuſtice of the reſt:
Averſe they heard me when I counſell'd well,
Their hearts were harden'd, and they juſtly fell.
Oh ſpare an augur's conſecrated head,
Nor add the blameleſs to the guilty dead.
Prieſt as thou art! for that deteſted band
Thy lying prophecies deceiv'd the land:
Againſt Ulyſſes have thy vows been made;
For them, thy daily oriſons were paid:
Yet more, ev'n to our bed thy pride aſpires:
One common crime one common fate requires.
Thus ſpeaking, from the ground the ſword he took
Which Agelaus' dying hand forſook;
Full thro' his neck the weighty falchion ſped:
Along the pavement roll'd the mutt'ring head.

v. 347. *Leiodes firſt before the victor falls*
The wretched augur —— ——]

This Leiodes is the laſt perſon who ſurvives of the ſuitors; he was an augur and a prophet, and ought therefore to have followed wiſer counſels: he tells Ulyſſes that he endeavoured to reſtrain the ſuitors from their inſolence; but he himſelf aſpired to the bed of Penelope, and conſequently was an aſſociate in their conſpiracies. Leiodes falls without reſiſtance; and indeed it would have been very improper to have repreſented him encountering Ulyſſes in a ſingle combat, when above an hundred had not been able to ſtand before him: beſides, fighting is out of the character of Leiodes; he was not a man of the ſword, but an augur: it would therefore have been contrary to his function, to have drawn him engaging Ulyſſes; and conſequently, it is with great propriety that he is deſcribed falling not as a warriour, but as a ſuppliant.

Phemius alone the hand of vengeance ſpar'd,
Phemius the ſweet, the heav'n inſtructed bard.
Beſide the gate the rev'rend minſtrel ſtands;
The lyre, now ſilent, trembling in his hands;
Dubious to ſupplicate the chief, or fly
To Jove's inviolable altar nigh,

v. 371. *Dubious —— —— if to fly*
To Jove's inviolable altar nigh, &c.]

This altar of Jupiter Hercæus ſtood in the palace-yard; ſo called from ἕρκος, "the out-wall incloſing the court-yard." It ſtood in the open air, where they ſacrificed to Jupiter the guardian, or protector; and within the palace to Ζεὺς ἑστιοῦχος.

Jupiter was worſhipped under the ſame name by the Romans. Thus Ovid,

"Cui nihil Hercæi profuit ara Jovis."

The altar mentioned by Virgil, Æneid. ii. was of the ſame nature; to which Priam fled at the taking of Troy.

Uncover'd but by heav'n, there ſtood in view
An altar; near the hearth a laurel grew.
Dodder'd with age; whoſe boughs encompaſs round
The houſhold gods, and ſhade the holy ground.

Theſe altars were places of ſanctuary, and by flying to them the perſon was thought to be under the immediate protection of the deity, and therefore in ſome caſes inviolable. The ſame practice prevailed amongſt the Jews, for we find frequently in the ſcriptures that it was cuſtomary to fly to the altar as to a place of refuge, which is evident from the expreſſion of laying hold on the horns of the altar. This is the reaſon why Phemius entertains an intention to fly to the altar of Jupiter Hercæus. Plutarch, in his treatiſe upon Muſic, informs us, that Demodocus was reported to have wrote a poem, intitled, "The deſtruction of Troy:" and Phemius another, called, "The return of the Grecian captains:" but by theſe poets Homer probably means only himſelf, who was author of two poems, the Iliad, and the Odyſſey. Homer (remarks Euſtathius) plainly ſhews us the notion he had of the great qualifications that were neceſſary to form a good poet. He muſt ſing of men and gods; that is, be thoroughly acquainted with all things both human and divine; he muſt be αὐτοδίδακτος, or "ſelf-taught;" that is, as we expreſs it, he muſt be a genius; he muſt have a natural ability, which is indeed to be improved, but not capable of being learned, by ſtudy: he adds, that beſides this felicity of nature, he muſt have an heavenly inſpiration; this implies that he muſt have a kind of enthuſiaſm, an elevation of ſoul which is not

Where oft' Laertes holy vows had paid,
And oft' Ulyſſes ſmoking victims laid.
His honour'd harp with care he firſt ſet down,
Between the laver and the ſilver throne;
Then proſtrate ſtretch'd before the dreadful man,
Perſuaſive, thus, with accent ſoft began.
O king! to mercy be thy ſoul inclin'd,
And ſpare the poet's ever-gentle kind.
A deed like this thy future fame would wrong,
For dear to gods and men is ſacred ſong.

to be obtained by labour and induſtry, and conſequently is the gift of heaven. Thus Pindar,

——— σοφὰς ὁ πυλ-
λὰ εἰδὼς φυᾷ.
Μαθόντες δὲ, λαθροι
Παγλωσσία, κόρακες ὥς,
Ἀκραντα γαρύετον.

The bards, whom true poetic flame inſpires,
Receive from nature more than human fires;
In vain from arts alone they tune the voice,
Like crows they croak, nor is it ſong, but noiſe.

This is the Mens Divinior of Horace: by induſtry men may become great ſcholars and philoſophers; but no man was ever a great poet, without being in the ſtricteſt ſenſe a great genius. I will only add, that Ariſtotle in his Rhet. i. 7. quotes this hemiſtic αὐτοδί-δακτος, &c. as an inſtance that natural are more excellent than acquired abilities; he gives the reaſon of it; namely becauſe they are more uncommon, and not to be obtained by human induſtry. Maximus Tyrius has a criticiſm upon it. How (objects that author) can it be ſaid that the poet is ſelf-taught, if the gods teach him to ſing? The anſwer is eaſy, Homer means that he has no human inſtructor, and only oppoſes natural to acquired abilities. It is obſervable that Maximus Tyrius erroneouſly quotes the verſe, Diſſert. xxii. for he writes, Θεοὶ δὲ μοὶ ὤπασαν ὁμφὴν, inſtead of

——— Θεὸς δὲ μοὶ ἐν φρεσὶν οἵμας
Παντοίας ἀνέφυσεν ———

He likewiſe puts the words in the mouth of Demodocus, which are here ſpoken by Phemius; he undoubtedly quoted by memory.

What Homer adds after all this, to raiſe the character of his poet, is very remarkably moral. That he never turned his talents to flattery, nor was it voluntarily that he ſerved or entertained unworthy men, but was merely compelled to it by their violence.

Self-taught I ſing; by heav'n, and heav'n alone,
The genuine ſeeds of poeſy are ſown;
And (what the gods beſtow) the loſty lay,
To gods alone, and god-like worth, we pay.
Save then the poet, and thyſelf reward;
'Tis thine to merit, mine is to record.
That here I ſung, was force and not deſire;
This hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire:
And let thy ſon atteſt, nor ſordid pay,
Nor ſervile flatt'ry, ſtain'd the moral lay.
The moving words Telemachus attends,
His fire approaches, and the bard defends.
Oh mix not, father, with thoſe impious dead
The man divine; forbear that ſacred head;
Medon the herald too our arms may ſpare,
Medon, who made my infancy his care;
If yet he breathes, permit thy ſon to give
Thus much to gratitude, and bid him live.
Beneath a table, trembling with diſmay,
Couch'd cloſe to earth, unhappy Medon lay,
Wrapt in a new ſlain ox's ample hide:
Swift at the word he caſt his ſkreen aſide,
Sprung to the prince, embrac'd his knee with tears,
And thus with grateful voice addreſs'd his ears!
O prince! O friend! lo here thy Medon ſtands;
Ah ſtop the hero's unreſiſted hands,
Incens'd too juſtly by that impious brood,
Whoſe guilty glories now are ſet in blood.
To whom Ulyſſes with a pleaſing eye:
Be bold, on friendſhip and my ſon rely;
Live, an example for the world to read,
How much more ſafe the good than evil deed:

v. 413. *Live, an example for the world to read,*
How much more ſafe the good than evil deed.]

The moral intended to be taught by the fable of the Odyſſey is, to ſhew virtue, though long in diſtreſs, at length triumphant; and

Thou, with the heav'n-taught bard, in peace reſort
From blood and carnage to yon' open court:
Me other work requires—With tim'rous awe
From the dire ſcene th' exempted two withdraw,
Scarce ſure of life, look round, and trembling move
To the bright altars of protector Jove.

Meanwhile Ulyſſes ſearch'd the dome, to find
If yet there live of all th' offending kind.
Not one! complete the bloody tale he found,
All ſleep'd in blood, all gaſping on the ground.
So, when by hollow ſhores the fiſher train,
Sweep with their arching-nets the hoary main,
And ſcarce the meſhy toils the copious draught contain,

vice, though long ſucceſsful, unfortunate in the concluſion: it is to this effect that Ulyſſes here ſpeaks; and to give his words more weight, he throws them into a ſentence. It is with excellent judgment that it is here placed by Homer: the puniſhment is no ſooner over but Ulyſſes declares the equity of it; he ſpeaks to all mankind, and lays it down as an univerſal truth, that virtue is to be preferred before vice, and invites us to the practice of the former, by ſhewing the ſucceſs of it in his own victory; and deters us from the latter, by repreſenting the ill conſequences of it in the deſtruction of the ſuitors.

v. 425. *So, when by hollow ſhores the fiſher train*
Sweep with their arching-nets the hoary main.]

The antients, remarks Euſtathius, obſerve that this is the only place where Homer manifeſtly ſpeaks of catching fiſh with nets: for thoſe words, lib. v. v. 595. of the Iliad,

——— —— and ſweep away
Sons, ſires, and wives, an undiſtinguiſh'd prey;

which in the Greek is expreſſed by ἀφῖσι λίνα ἁλόντε πανάγρῃ, may be appplied to the taking of beaſts or birds by nets, and conſequently ought not to be appropriated to fiſhing. Thus it is evident that this art was practiſed very antiently amongſt the Grecians; it was likewiſe known early to the Hebrews and Ægyptians. Thus Iſaiah xix. 8. "The fiſhers (of Ægypt) ſhall mourn, all they that "caſt the angle into the brook ſhall lament, and they that ſpread "nets upon the waters ſhall languiſh." And that they fiſhed the ſeas with nets is evident from Ezekiel xxvi. 5. "It ſhall be a "place for the ſpreading of nets in the midſt of the ſea." The compariſon is very juſt; and the laſt line of it gives a peculiar honour and diſtinction to Ulyſſes: that hero is the ſun who kills the ſuitors, in application of the ſimilitude.

All naked of their element, and bare,
The fiſhes pant, and gaſp in thinner air;
Wide o'er the ſands are ſpread the ſtiff'ning prey
'Till the warm ſun exhales their ſoul away.
And now the king commands his ſon to call
Old Euryclea, to the deathful hall:
The ſon obſervant not a moment ſtays;
The aged governeſs with ſpeed obeys:
The ſounding portals inſtant they diſplay;
The matron moves, the prince directs the way.
On heaps of death the ſtern Ulyſſes ſtood,
All black with duſt, and cover'd thick with blood.
So the grim lion from the ſlaughter comes,
Dreadful he glares, and terribly he foams,
His breaſt with marks of carnage painted o'er,
His jaws all dropping with the bull's black gore.
Soon as her eyes the welcome object met,
The guilty fall'n, the mighty deed compleat;
A ſcream of joy her feeble voice eſſay'd:
The hero check'd her, and compos'dly ſaid.
Woman, experienc'd as thou art, controul
Indecent joy, and feaſt thy ſecret ſoul.
T' inſult the dead is cruel and unjuſt;
Fate, and their crime, have ſunk them to the duſt.

v. 440. *So the grim lion*, &c.] Euſtathius agrees with an obſervation which has been made concerning the ſimilitudes of the Odyſſey, lib. xvi. He here remarks that compariſons are as rare in the Odyſſey as they are frequent in the Iliad; and that the difference ariſes from the difference of the ſubjects: the ſubject of the Iliad is great, and therefore properly illuſtrated by noble images, and a variety of ſublime compariſons: the ſubject of the Odyſſey requires to be related in a leſs exalted ſtyle, and with greater ſimplicity. This book is an undeniable teſtimony of the truth of this obſervation: the ſtory of it approaches nearer to the nature of the Iliad than any other book of the Odyſſey, and we find it is more adorned with compariſons than almoſt all the reſt of the poem.

v. 450. *T' inſult the dead is cruel and unjuſt.*] The word in the original is ὀλόλυζα, and here ſignifies a voice of joy. In other places it is uſed to denote a ſorrowful lamentation. See note on

Nor heeded theſe the cenſure of mankind,
The good and bad were equal in their mind.
Juſtly the price of worthleſſneſs they paid,
And each now wails an unlamented ſhade.
But thou ſincere! Oh Euryclea, ſay,
What maids diſhonour us, and what obey?
Then ſhe. In theſe thy kingly walls remain
(My ſon) full fifty of the handmaid train,
Taught by my care to cull the fleece, or weave,
And ſervitude with pleaſing taſks deceive;

v. 573. of the third Odyſſey. I am wonderfully pleaſed with the noble ſentiment of Ulyſſes contained in theſe lines. It is full of piety and humanity: good nature feels for the ſufferings of any of its fellow-creatures. Even in puniſhment we are to remember, that thoſe we puniſh are men, and inflict it as a neceſſary juſtice, not as a triumph. Such here is the conduct of Ulyſſes; he is ſo far from rejoicing in his ſucceſs, that he reſtrains others from it; and ſeems to be a mourner at the funeral of his enemies. He falls into the ſame thought with Job xxxi. 29. "If I rejoiced at the deſtruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myſelf when evil found him: If I ſuffered my mouth to ſin, by wiſhing a curſe to his ſoul," &c.

Were a prince, who makes war for glory, to ſtand upon a field of battle immediately after victory, amidſt the horrours of the dead, and the groans of the dying; it would ſurely mortify his ambition to ſee ſuch horrible monuments of his glory. If the death of thouſands of brave men were weighed in a ſcale againſt a name, a popular empty breath of a multitude, and if reaſon held the ballance, how eaſily would the diſproportion be diſcovered?

v. 453. *The good and bad were equal in their mind.*] There is ſome obſcurity in theſe words, "they neither reſpected the good nor the bad man;" or as Homer expreſſes it,

Οὐ κακὸν ἔδ' ἐὲ μὲν ἐσθλὸν.

A reverence is due to a good man, and conſequently it is a crime to deny it; but why ſhould it be objected to the ſuitors as a fault that they deſpiſed the bad man, whoſe actions deſerved to be deſpiſed? Euſtathius anſwers, κακὸς may ſignify ταπεινὸς, or a perſon of a low condition, the poor man, or the ſtranger; and this juſtifies the aſſertion: but perhaps the poet uſes it to ſhew that they deſpiſed and outraged all men univerſally without diſtinction, whether perſons of probity or diſhoneſty; they conſidered not the condition of others, but were inſolent to all mankind.

Of theſe, twice ſix purſue their wicked way,
Nor me nor chaſte Penelope obey;
Nor fits it that Telemachus command
(Young as he is) his mother's female band.
Hence to the upper chambers let me fly,
Where ſlumbers ſoft now cloſe the royal eye;
There wake her with the news—The matron cry'd;
Not ſo (Ulyſſes more ſedate reply'd)

v. 462. *Of theſe, twice ſix purſue their wicked way.*] It is remarkable, obſerves Monſieur Bayle, that of fifty women, ſo few as twelve only ſhould yield to the deſires of the ſuitors. But it is not indeed affirmed that the reſt were ever tempted by any importunities. Plutarch, in his treatiſe of Education, informs us, that Bion wittily applied this paſſage to the ſtudy of the ſciences: when the ſuitors failed in their attempts upon Penelope, they condeſcended to addreſs her maids: ſo men who are not capable of underſtanding philoſophy, buſy themſelves with ſtudies of no value.

v. 464. *Nor fits it that Telemachus command*
(Young as he is) his mother's female band.]

This, remarks Euſtathius, is an inſtance of the maternal wiſdom of Penelope; and at the ſame time a vindication of Telemachus for not reſtraining the inſolence and immodeſty of theſe female ſervants; they were out of his juriſdiction, and immediately under the protection of Penelope. But is not this removal of the fault from Telemachus, an imputation upon the queen? and if the ſon wanted an excuſe for not puniſhing their crimes, is the mother unblameable, who not only permits the diſorder of their lives, but forbids Telemachus to redreſs it? Is it to be ſuppoſed that this chaſte matron was more indulgent to female frailty than Telemachus? The true reaſon is, Telemachus could not, and Penelope durſt not, ſhew a juſt reſentment againſt theſe criminals: they had too great an intereſt in the chief of the ſuitors to ſtand in awe of the queen, or fear her vengeance. This is evident, for Penelope herſelf was in a great meaſure in their power, and the ſame authority that ſupported the ſuitors in their inſolence againſt the queen, would ſupport theſe females againſt her revenge for their immodeſty.

v. 469. *Not ſo (Ulyſſes more ſedate reply'd).*] Ulyſſes gives this injunction, becauſe he is unwilling to wound the eyes of Penelope with a ſpectacle of ſuch horrour as the dead bodies and blood of the ſuitors. It was indeed neceſſary to find ſome reaſonable pretext for not introducing the queen immediately; this might be expected from the fondneſs and affection of an huſband towards a beloved wife, and therefore Ulyſſes makes even his fondneſs for her a reaſon why he delays his diſcovery, namely, his care not to grieve her

Bring firſt the crew who wrought theſe guilty deeds;
In haſte the matron parts: the king proceeds.
Now to diſpoſe the dead, the care remains
To you, my ſon, and you, my faithful ſwains;
Th' offending females to that taſk we doom,
To waſh, to ſcent, and purify the room.
Theſe (ev'ry table cleans'd, and ev'ry throne,
And all the melancholy labour done)
Drive to yon' court, without the palace-wall,
There the revenging ſword ſhall ſmite them all;

with ſuch a terrible ſcene of ſlaughter: beſides, the death of the female ſervants is to ſucceed, and it would have been indecent to have made her aſſiſting or preſent at their execution. The poet reaps a further advantage from this conduct; for by it he introduces the diſcovery to Penelope, in a time of leiſure, and finds an opportunity to deſcribe at large that ſurpriſing and tender incident.

v. 477. ——— — *the melancholy labour done)*
Drive to yon' court — ———]

It would in theſe ages, obſerves Dacier, be thought barbarous in a king to command his ſon to perform an execution of ſo much horrour; but antiently it was thought no diſhonour: thus in the ſcriptures, Gideon having taken Zeba and Salmana, two Midian kings, commands his ſon to kill them with the ſword in his preſence: but, continues that author, I wiſh Homer had deviated from this cuſtom, that he had given both Ulyſſes and Telemachus ſentiments of more humanity, and ſpared his reader a deſcription of ſuch a terrible execution. I am not delighted with any thing that has a tendency to inhumanity more than that lady; but it may be anſwered, that Homer was obliged to write according to the cuſtom of the age. Virgil has aſcribed an act more cruel to the pious Æneas, who ſacrifices ſeveral unfortunate young men who were his captives. Æn. xi. v. 15.

Then, pinion'd with their hands behind appear
Th' unhappy captives marching in the rear;
Appointed off'rings in the victor's name,
To ſprinkle with their blood the funeral flame. Dryden.

This act is to be aſcribed to the manners of the age, and the cuſtoms of war in the days of Æneas, and not to his inhumanity: but here it may ſeem eſſential to the very nature of epic poetry to relate this act of juſtice: the moral of it is, to ſee the good rewarded and the wicked puniſhed, in the concluſion of the fable. Theſe criminals had been as guilty in their ſeveral capacities as the ſuitors themſelves; it was therefore neceſſary that their puniſhment ſhould be ſet before the reader, as well as that of the ſuitors.

So with the ſuitors let them mix in duſt,
Stretch'd in a long oblivion of their luſt.
He ſaid: the lamentable train appear,
Each vents a groan, and drops a tender tear;
Each heav'd her mournful burthen, and beneath
The porch, depos'd the ghaſtly heaps of death.
The chief ſevere, compelling each to move,
Urg'd the dire taſk imperious from above.
With thirſty ſponge they rub the tables o'er,
(The ſwains unite their toil) the walls, the floor
Waſh'd with th' effuſive wave, are purg'd of gore.
Once more the palace ſet in fair array,
To the baſe court the female s take their way;
There compaſs'd cloſe between the dome and wall,
(Their life's laſt ſcene) they trembling wait their fall.
Then thus the prince. To theſe ſhall we afford
A fate ſo pure, as by the martial ſword?
To theſe, the nightly proſtitutes to ſhame,
And baſe revilers of our houſe and name?
Thus ſpeaking, on the circling wall he ſtrung
A ſhip's tough cable, from a column hung;
Near the high top he ſtrain'd it ſtrongly round,
Whence no contending foot could reach the ground.
Their heads above connected in a row,
They beat the air with quiv'ring feet below:
Thus on ſome tree hung ſtruggling in the ſnare,
The doves or thruſhes flap their wings in air.

v. 505. *Thus on ſome tree hung ſtruggling in the ſnare.*] Nothing can better repreſent to us the image of theſe ſufferers than this ſimilitude of a bird taken by the neck in a gin or ſnare. Hobbes, in his verſion, has omitted it; and Dacier has abridged the whole deſcription.

Euſtathius is pleaſant upon the death of theſe wantons. What a certain perſon, ſays he, once ſpoke of a fig-tree, on which his clamorous wife had hanged herſelf, viz. "I wiſh all trees bore "ſuch fruit," may be applied to theſe ropes, "It were to be "wiſhed that all nooſes could catch ſuch birds." This remark

Soon fled the ſoul impure, and left behind
The empty corſe to waver with the wind.
Then forth they led Melanthius, and began
Their bloody work: they lopp'd away the man,
Morſel for dogs! then trimm'd with brazen ſheers
The wretch, and ſhorten'd of his noſe and ears;
His hands and feet laſt felt the cruel ſteel:
He roar'd, and torments gave his ſoul to hell—
They waſh, and to Ulyſſes take their way,
So ends the bloody buſineſs of the day.
To Euryclea then addreſt the king:
Bring hither fire, and hither ſulphur bring,
To purge the palace: then the queen attend,
And let her with her matron-train deſcend;
The matron-train with all the virgin band
Aſſemble here, to learn their lord's command.
Then Euryclea; Joyful I obey,
But caſt thoſe mean diſhoneſt rags away;
Permit me firſt thy royal robes to bring:
Ill ſuits this garb the ſhoulders of a king.
"Bring ſulphur ſtraight and fire" (the monarch cries)
She hears, and at the word obedient flies.

has eſcaped the notice of Madam Dacier; becauſe the race of clamorous women has been long extinct, and therefore there was no occaſion to preſcribe a remedy for a diſeaſe unknown to theſe happy ages.

v. 527. *Bring ſulphur ſtraight and fire* —— ——] The reaſon why Ulyſſes orders ſulphur to be brought, is, becauſe every thing was thought to be polluted by a dead body, and he uſes it by way of purification. The ſame opinion prevailed amongſt the Hebrews as well as Greeks, as the ſcriptures inform us. Thus alſo in Job it is ſaid, "Brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation," xviii. 15. which is thought to allude to this cuſtom. Livy mentions this practice amongſt the Romans, lib. xxx. c. 15. "Habet "& in religionibus locum ad expiandas ſuffitu domus."

Homer deſcribes the female ſervants deſcending with torches; this is done to ſhew the exact time of the action of this book, which is comprehended in the evening of the fortieth day.

Ulyſſes forbids Euryclea to bring a better garment: this little particularity is inſerted with judgment; for the diſguiſe of Ulyſ-

With fire and ſulphur, cure of noxious fumes,
He purg'd the walls and blood-polluted rooms.
Again the matron ſprings with eager pace,
And ſpreads her lord's return from place to place.
They hear, ruſh forth, and inſtant round him ſtand,
A gazing throng, a torch in ev'ry hand.
They ſaw, they knew him, and with fond embrace
Each humbly kiſs'd his knee, or hand or face;
He knows them all; in all ſuch truth appears,
Ev'n he indulges the ſweet joy of tears.

ſes in the garb of a beggar contributes to increaſe the incredulity of Penelope, and conſequently to all thoſe doubts and fears, and that ſtruggle between the love of a huſband and the dread of an impoſtor, which are the ſubject of the ſucceeding book.

THE ODYSSEY.

* BOOK XXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Euryclea awakens Penelope with the news of Ulyſſes's return, and the death of the ſuitors. Penelope ſcarcely credits her, but ſuppoſes ſome god has puniſhed them, and deſcends from her apartment in doubt. At the firſt interview of Ulyſſes and Penelope, ſhe is quite unſatisfied. Minerva reſtores him to the beauty of his youth; but the queen continues incredulous, till by ſome circumſtances ſhe is convinced, and falls into all the tranſports of paſſion and tenderneſs. They recount to each other all that has paſt during their long ſeparation. The next morning Ulyſſes, arming himſelf and his friends, goes from the city to viſit his father.

THEN to the queen, as in repoſe ſhe lay,
The nurſe with eager rapture ſpeeds her way;
The tranſports of her faithful heart ſupply
A ſudden youth, and give her wings to fly.

* This book contains the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Penelope. Monſieur Rapin is very ſevere upon ſome parts of it; whoſe objections I ſhall here recite.

The diſcovery of Ulyſſes to his queen was the moſt favourable occaſion imaginable for the poet to give us ſome of the niceſt touches of his art; but as he has managed it, it has nothing but faint and weak ſurpriſes, cold and languiſhing aſtoniſhments, and very little of that delicacy and exquiſiteneſs which ought to expreſs a conjugal tenderneſs: he leaves his wife too long in doubt and diſtruſt, and ſhe is too cautious and circumſpect; the formalities ſhe obſerves in being fully aſſured, and her care to act with ſecurity, are ſet down in number and meaſure, leſt ſhe ſhould fall into any miſtake; and this particularity makes the ſtory dull, in a

And ſleeps my child? the rev'rend matron cries: 5
Ulyſſes lives! ariſe, my child, ariſe!

place that ſo much requires briſkneſs and livelineſs. Ought not the ſecret inſtinct of her love to have inſpired her with other ſentiments? and ſhould not her heart have told her, what her eyes could not? Love is penetrating, and whiſpers more to us than the ſenſes can convey; but Homer underſtood not this philoſophy: Virgil, who makes Dido foreſee that Æneas deſigns to leave her, would have made better advantage of this favourable opportunity.

The ſtrength of this objection conſiſts chiefly in the long incredulity of Penelope, and the ſlowneſs ſhe uſes to make an undeniable diſcovery: this Rapin judges to be contrary to the paſſion of love, and conſequently that the poet writes unnaturally.

There is ſomewhat of the Frenchman in this criticiſm: Homer, in his opinion, wants vivacity; and if Rapin had been to have drawn Ulyſſes, we had ſeen him all tranſport and ecſtaſy. But where there is moſt fancy, there is often the leaſt judgment. Penelope thought Ulyſſes to be dead: he had been abſent twenty years; and through abſence and his preſent diſguiſe, he was another perſon from that Ulyſſes whom ſhe knew, when he ſailed to Troy; ſo that he was become an abſolute ſtranger. From this obſervation we may appeal to the reader's judgment, if Penelope, without full conviction, ought to be perſuaded that this perſon was the real Ulyſſes? And how could ſhe be convinced, but by aſking many queſtions, and deſcending to particularities, which muſt neceſſarily occaſion delay in the diſcovery? If indeed Ulyſſes and Penelope had met after a ſhorter abſence, when one view would have aſſured her that he was her real huſband, then too much tranſport could not have been expreſſed by the poet: but this is not the caſe, ſhe is firſt to know her huſband, before ſhe could or ought to expreſs her fondneſs for his return, otherwiſe ſhe might be in danger of miſplacing it upon an impoſtor: but ſhe is no ſooner convinced that Ulyſſes is actually returned, but ſhe receives him with as much fondneſs as can be expreſſed, or as Rapin could require.

While yet he ſpeaks, her pow'rs of life decay,
She ſickens, trembles, falls, and faints away:
At length recov'ring, to his arms ſhe flew,
And ſtrain'd him cloſe, as to his breaſt ſhe grew.

Till this moment the diſcovery was not evidently made, and her paſſion would have been unſeaſonable; but this is no ſooner done, but ſhe falls into an agony of affection. If ſhe had here appeared cool and indifferent, there had been weight in Rapin's objections. Beſides, Ariſtotle informs us, there was a play, called The falſe Ulyſſes: it was formed upon a ſtory of a perſon who deſigned to ſurpriſe Penelope, and told her, that he was her huſband; and to confirm it, pretended to remember a bow, which he uſed before he

At length appears the long-expected hour!
Ulyſſes comes! the ſuitors are no more!

went to the ſiege of Troy. This ſhews that Penelope had been in danger from impoſtors, and it is therefore very prudent in her to be upon the guard, and not to yield without full conviction.

But there is a diſpute of a different nature mentioned by Monſieur Bayle; namely, whether if Penelope had yielded to an impoſtor, believing him to be really Ulyſſes, ſhe had been guilty of adultery? Monſieur Baſnage thus argues: "Let us ſuppoſe a wife tranſported "with love for an huſband, running eagerly to the perſon ſhe "miſtakes for him: this woman has no deſign to be deceived, "one cannot blame her ardour; it is lawful, if he proves her "real huſband: in ſhort, her ignorance is involuntary, and oc- "caſioned ſolely by a laudable paſſion for her huſband: yet if this "perſon prove an adulterer, is the wife entirely inexcuſable? "ought her eagerneſs and precipitation to give her no uneaſineſs? "Undoubtedly it ought, becauſe ſhe is ſuppoſed to act precipi- "tately, without a full examination: her paſſion is ſtronger than "her reaſon, and therefore ſhe is blameable." The author of the General Critique on Maimbourg is more indulgent: he judges that if a woman does not refuſe a ſtrict examination out of a blame- able motive, ſhe is excuſable, though ſhe happens to oblige an impoſtor. "If a wife, deceived by the reſemblance between her "huſband and an impoſtor, ſhall allow the latter all the privileges "of the marriage-bed, this action is no ſtain to her chaſtity; and "the huſband would be the moſt unreaſonable creature breathing, "ſhould he blame it as a breach of conjugal fidelity, provided ſhe "is no way acceſſary to the impoſition." So that, according to this author, though the wife is betrayed by her precipitation, yet ſhe is to be accounted innocent; becauſe the precipitation, is oc- caſioned by a vehemence of love for her huſband. But I fear few huſbands who ſhould take their wives in ſuch circumſtances would excuſe them, or believe that they had uſed due circumſpection. In ſhort, Monſieur Bayle rightly decides the queſtion, by ſaying, that every perſon who acts precipitately is culpable; and that no perſon can act rationally, without a full and ſatisfactory exami- nation. And indeed if this rule were obſerved, there would ſcarce be any room for the aforeſaid ſuppoſition. The reſemblance be- tween man and man is never ſo perfect, but the difference, upon a ſtrict obſervation, is diſcernible; we may therefore conclude, that a wife who ſhould ſuffer ſuch a deceit, was not very unwil- ling to be deceived; eſpecially when there muſt be between a man and a wife a thouſand particularities, which could only be known to the wife and huſband, which upon a due ſcrutiny would diſcover the impoſture.

I fear I ſhall be tedious to the reader, by mentioning another difficulty of a ſimilar nature ſtarted by Seneca. "If any perſon

No more they view the golden light of day;
Ariſe, and bleſs thee with the glad ſurvey!
Touch'd at her words, the mournful queen rejoin'd,
Ah! whither wanders thy diſtemper'd mind?
The righteous pow'rs who tread the ſtarry ſkies,
The weak enlighten, and confound the wiſe,
And human thought with unreſiſted ſway,
Depreſs or raiſe, enlarge or take away:
Truth, by their high decree, thy voice forſakes,
And folly with the tongue of wiſdom ſpeaks.
Unkind, the fond illuſion to impoſe!
Was it to flatter or deride my woes?

" ſhould make an aſſignation with his own wife in diſguiſe, ſup-
" poſing her to be the wife of another perſon, would he be guilty
" of adultery?" He anſwers in the affirmative; though the wife herſelf would be innocent; for he is guilty intentionally. This may be illuſtrated by the example of Jacob, who was blameleſs when he was deceived by Leah, who perſonated his wife Rachel; but Leah was culpable, though Jacob was innocent, for ſhe very well knew that ſhe was not wife to Jacob. But this is the province of a caſuiſt, not of a commentator.

v. 6. *Ulyſſes lives! ——— Ulyſſes comes!*] In the Greek it is literally, Ulyſſes is come, he is at length come to his palace. This laſt circumſtance is not a tautology; for, obſerves Euſtathius, a perſon may be returned to his country, and yet never arrive at his family: thus Agamemnon reached his dominions in ſafety, but was aſſaſſinated before he came to his palace. We may obſerve in general, that Euryclea and Penelope, through their whole conference, ſpeak with brevity; Homer was too good a judge of human nature, to repreſent them ſpeaking with prolixity. Paſſion is always in haſte, and delivers itſelf with precipitation; and this is very well painted in this interview: Euryclea is in a tranſport of joy for the return of Ulyſſes, and Penelope has all her affections awakened at the news of it.

v. 13. *The righteous pow'rs who tread the ſtarry ſkies,*
The weak enlighten, and confound the wiſe.]

This is an admirable ſentiment: it is conſonant to many expreſſions in the holy ſcriptures. God is the lord of ſpirits, and gives and takes away as ſeems beſt to his infinite wiſdom. The thoughts of man, as well as his life, are equally in the power of the Almighty.

Never did I a ſleep ſo ſweet enjoy,
Since my dear lord left Ithaca for Troy,
Why muſt I wake to grieve; and curſe thy ſhore,
O Troy?—may never tongue pronounce thee more!
Be gone: another might have felt our rage,
But age is ſacred, and we ſpare thy age.
To whom with warmth: My ſoul a lie diſdains;
Ulyſſes lives, thy own Ulyſſes reigns:
That ſtranger, patient of the ſuitors wrongs,
And the rude licence of ungovern'd tongues,
He, he is thine! thy ſon, his latent gueſt
Long knew, but lock'd the ſecret in his breaſt;
With well-concerted art to end his woes,
And burſt at once in vengeance on the foes.
While yet ſhe ſpoke, the queen in tranſport ſprung
Swift from the couch, and round the matron hung;

v. 21. *Never did I a ſleep ſo ſweet enjoy*, &c.] Homer, obſerves Euſtathius, very judiciouſly mentions this profound ſleep of Penelope; for it might have been thought improbable, that ſhe ſhould not wake at the noiſe and confuſion of the battle. It was ſolely to reconcile it to credibility, that in a preceding book Pallas was introduced to throw her into it: beſides, the womens apartment was always in the upper part of the houſe, and was from thence called ὑπερῷον: and conſequently Penelope was at a ſufficient diſtance from the place of the combat, and may be eaſily ſuppoſed not to be waked by it.

The circumſtance of Penelope's not being awaked by the cries of the ſuitors, furniſhes us with a reaſon why they are not [illegible] by the Ithacans that lived near the palace: for if [illegible] in the palace is not diſturbed by the noiſe, it is [illegible] that the Greeks who lived at ſome diſtance from the [illegible] not hear it.

v. 35. ——— *the queen in tranſport ſprung*
Swift from the couch ———]

We are not to gather from this tranſport of Penelope, that [illegible] fully convinced of the return of Ulyſſes: ſhe is yet [illegible] but ſhe muſt have been inſenſible if ſhe had [illegible] at the mention of the arrival of an huſband, [illegible] been deſcribed through the whole Odyſſey as [illegible] all her deſires. Beſides, ſhe receives the death of [illegible] joy; ſhe cannot diſbelieve the [illegible]

Faſt from her eye deſcends the rolling tear,
Say, once more ſay, is my Ulyſſes here?
How could that num'rous and outrageous band
By one be ſlain, tho' by an hero's hand?
I ſaw it not, ſhe cries, but heard alone,
When death was buſy, a loud dying groan,
The damſel-train turn'd pale at every wound,
Immur'd we ſat, and catch'd each paſſing ſound;
When death had ſeiz'd her prey, thy ſon attends,
And at his nod the damſel-train deſcends;
There terrible in arms Ulyſſes ſtood,
And the dead ſuitors almoſt ſwam in blood;
Thy heart had leap'd the hero to ſurvey,
Stern as the ſurly lion o'er his prey,
Glorious in gore!—Now with ſulphureous fires
The dome he purges, now the flame aſpires;

their deaths; but thinking it impoſſible that they ſhould be ſlain by any one perſon, ſhe aſcribes their deſtruction not to Ulyſſes, but a deity. But then is not ſuch a ſuppoſition extravagant? and can it be reconciled to probability, that a god ſhould really be ſuppoſed to deſcend to work their deſtruction? It may be anſwered, that the exceſs of the aſſertion ought to be aſcribed to the exceſs of joy in the ſpeaker: Penelope is in a tranſport, and no wonder if ſhe ſpeaks with amplification: ſhe judges it impoſſible that ſuch a great event ſhould be wrought by a mortal hand; and it is therefore very natural, while ſhe is under a ſurpriſe, and her thoughts raiſed above the bounds of calm reaſon, to aſcribe it to a deity.

It has been believed that all the notions of good and bad dæmons that prevailed among the antients were borrowed from truth, and that they received them by tradition from the offices of good and bad angels: If I might be allowed to make this ſuppoſition, then what Penelope here ſpeaks may be reconciled to ſtrict verity; then we may find a reaſon why ſhe may without extravagance aſcribe the ſuitors death to a dæmon, or deity. Thus, 2 Kings xix. 35. "That night the angel of the Lord went out and ſmote "in the camp of the Aſſyrians an hundred fourſcore and five "thouſand." If this ſuppoſition be thought diſallowable, the former will be a ſufficient vindication. I will only add, that the poet artfully turns the incredulity of Penelope to the praiſe of Ulyſſes; the exploit was ſo great, that no mortal was brave enough to perform it; it muſt therefore be wrought by a god; but this god is at length diſcovered to be Ulyſſes.

Heap'd lie the dead without the palace walls,—
Haſte, daughter, haſte, thy own Ulyſſes calls!
Thy ev'ry wiſh the bounteous gods beſtow,
Enjoy the preſent good, and former woe;
Ulyſſes lives his vanquiſh'd foes to ſee;
He lives to thy Telemachus and thee!
Ah no! with ſighs Penelope rejoin'd,
Exceſs of joy diſturbs thy wand'ring mind;
How bleſt this happy hour, ſhould he appear,
Dear to us all, to me ſupremely dear!
Ah no! ſome god the ſuitors deaths decreed,
Some god deſcends, and by his hand they bleed;
Blind! to contemn the ſtranger's righteous cauſe,
And violate all hoſpitable laws!
The good they hated, and the pow'rs defy'd;
But heav'n is juſt, and by a god they dy'd.
For never muſt Ulyſſes view this ſhore!
Never! the lov'd Ulyſſes is no more!
What words (the matron cries) have reach'd my ears?
Doubt we his preſence, when he now appears?
Then hear conviction: ere the fatal day
That forc'd Ulyſſes o'er the wat'ry way,
A boar fierce ruſhing in the ſilvan war
Plough'd half his thigh; I ſaw, I ſaw the ſcar,
And wild with tranſport had reveal'd the wound;
But ere I ſpoke, he roſe, and check'd the ſound.
Then, daughter, haſte away! and if a lie
Flow from this tongue, then let thy ſervant die!
To whom with dubious joy the queen replies,
Wiſe is thy ſoul, but errours ſeize the wiſe;
The works of gods what mortal can ſurvey?
Who knows their motives, who ſhall trace their way!

v. 83. *The works of Gods what mortal can ſurvey?*] This aſſertion is made with great judgment. Eurycléa had given almoſt a demonſtrative proof that ſhe was not miſtaken in the perſon of Ulyſſes; ſhe had inſtanced in the ſcar which he received by a

But learn we inſtant how the ſuitors trod
The paths of death, by man or by a god.
  Thus ſpeaks the queen, and no reply attends,
But with alternate joy and fear deſcends;
At ev'ry ſtep debates, her lord to prove!
Or ruſhing to his arms, confeſs her love!

boar on mount Parnaſſus; and this ſeemed to be an undeniable evidence of her veracity: what method then could the poet take to carry on Penelope's incredulity, and give her room to reſiſt ſuch evidence with any appearance of reaſon? This is very well explained by Euſtathius. Penelope (obſerves that author) anſwers with profound wiſdom; her words are ſhort, but contain excellent truth and morality: this is her meaning: "Euryclea, you appeal to your ſenſes for the truth of your affirmation; you ſaw the wound, and touched it as you bathed him; and he forbade you to make a diſcovery of his perſon: from hence you conclude, that it is Ulyſſes who has ſlain the ſuitors: not remembering that the gods are able thus to ſhew themſelves to man, and aſſume at their pleaſure ſuch diſguiſes: how then do you know but this is a god? Are you able to know the ways of a deity?" To this Euryclea makes no reply; from whence we may gather, that it was believed to be an undeniable truth, that the divine beings ſometimes aſſumed the ſhape of man, and appeared viſibly upon earth. Such expreſſions as theſe might almoſt perſuade us of the reality of a former conjecture, that theſe notions were borrowed from a tradition of the appearances of angels; they being ſo conſonant to the teſtimony of the holy ſcriptures, and ſo agreeable to the manifeſtations of thoſe celeſtial beings.

v. 89. *At ev'ry ſtep debates, her lord to prove!*
Or ruſhing to his arms, confeſs her love!]

Penelope apprehends that the perſon mentioned by Euryclea is not Ulyſſes; yet her apprehenſions are not ſo ſtrong as to exclude all hopes that he is her huſband; in this ſtate of uncertainty ſhe deſcends, doubtful whether to meet him as ſuch, or firſt to prove him whether he be the real Ulyſſes; and this explains her conduct in this place: if he evidently were Ulyſſes, ſhe ought to receive him with tranſport; but if he be not Ulyſſes, then all ſuch advances would be acts of immodeſty, and a reproach to her prudence. Ladies are beſt judges of what is decent amongſt ladies, and Madam Dacier affirms, that the point of decency is well maintained by Homer through this whole interview; and that antiquity can ſhew nothing wherein a ſeverity of manners is better obſerved. And indeed it muſt be allowed, that in this reſpect Penelope proceeds with no more than a neceſſary caution; it would have been very abſurd to have deſcribed her flying to the embraces

Then gliding thro' the marble valves, in ſtate
Oppos'd, before the ſhining fire ſhe ſat.
The monarch, by a column high enthron'd,
His eye withdrew, and fix'd it on the ground;
Curious to hear his queen the ſilence break:
Amaz'd ſhe ſat, and impotent to ſpeak;

of a ſtranger, merely upon the teſtimony of Euryclea, without waiting for a perſonal and ocular demonſtration.

v. 93. *The monarch, by a column high enthron'd.*] The circumſtance of perſons of figure being placed by a column occurs frequently in the Odyſſey; it may therefore be neceſſary to explain it: it is mentioned twice in the eighth book, πρὸς κίονα μακρὸν ἐρείσας, but being there applied to Demodocus who was blind, it may be thought to mean only that he leaned againſt the pillar by reaſon of his blindneſs; but this is not the full import of the words, they denote dignity; and a ſeat erected near the column was a ſeat of diſtinction. Thus 2 Kings xi. 14. "Behold the king ſtood by a "pillar," ἐπὶ τὸν ϛῦλον, "as the manner was, and the princes, &c. "by the king." Thus we ſee the royal ſtation was by ſome remarkable pillar; Joſephus expreſſes it by ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς, which probably is a corruption; it ought to be ἐπὶ τῆς ϛήλης, "juxta "columnam:" thus again, 2 Kings xxiii. 3. "And the king "ſtood by a pillar, and made a covenant," &c. So that by this expreſſion of Ulyſſes being ſeated by a column, we are to underſtand that he received Penelope as a king; he took the royal ſeat, to convince her that he was the real Ulyſſes.

v. 94. ——— *withdrew, and fix'd it on the ground;*
Curious to hear his queen the ſilence break.]

We have all along been vindicating the conduct of Penelope, for not immediately acknowledging Ulyſſes. Her ignorance of his perſon is her vindication; but how then is Ulyſſes to be juſtified, who is in no doubt about Penelope? Why does he not fly with tranſport to the wife of his affection? The reaſon is very evident: he very well knows that Penelope is uncertain about his perſon; he therefore forbears to offer violence to her modeſty by any careſſes, while ſhe is in this ſtate of uncertainty, and which decency requires her to refuſe, till ſhe is aſſured that the perſon who offers them is Ulyſſes.

Homer tells us, that Ulyſſes turned his eyes toward the ground. Euſtathius imagines, that he does it that Penelope may not immediately diſcover him; but perhaps the poet intended no more than to draw Ulyſſes here, as he drew him in the Iliad, lib. iii. and deſcribe him according to his uſual behaviour.

——— In thought profound,
His modeſt eyes he fix'd upon the ground.

O'er all the man her eyes ſhe rolls in vain
Now hopes, now fears, now knows, then doubts again.
At length Telemachus—Oh who can find
A woman like Penelope unkind?
Why thus in ſilence? why with winning charms
Thus ſlow, to fly with rapture to his arms?
Stubborn the breaſt that with no tranſport glows,
When twice ten years are paſt of mighty woes:
To ſoftneſs loſt, to ſpouſal love unknown,
The gods have form'd that rigid heart of ſtone!
O my Telemachus! the queen rejoin'd,
Diſtracting fears confound my lab'ring mind;

Thus alſo he is repreſented by Ovid. Metam. lib. xiii.

" Aſtitit atque oculos paulum tellure moratos
" Suſtulit" ———

Then from his ſeat aroſe Laertes' ſon,
Look'd down awhile, and paus'd ere he begun. Dryden.

v. 96. *Amaz'd ſhe ſat, and impotent to ſpeak.*] The reader will certainly be curious to know how Penelope accoſts Ulyſſes in this firſt interview, and the poet manages it with excellent judgment: ſhe muſt be ſuppoſed to be under a great ſurpriſe and confuſion of thought; this ſurpriſe takes away her ſpeech; ſhe is toſt between hopes and fears, and conſequently it is very natural, before ſhe ſpeaks, to examine him with her eyes.

v. 106. *The gods have form'd that rigid heart of ſtone.*] It has been objected that Telemachus here makes too free a remonſtrance to Penelope; and that he is wanting in reverence towards his mother. Euſtathius anſwers, that he ſpeaks no more than Ulyſſes ſays himſelf, in the proceſs of the ſtory, and conſequently he is no more blameable. But the caſe is not the ſame, there is a difference between a ſon and a huſband, and what is decent in the mouth of the latter would be irreverent in the former. Spondanus is of opinion, that he offends againſt decency, " Juveniliter nimis inſulta-" vit;" and Ulyſſes ſeems to repreſs his ardour.

Indulge, my ſon, the cautions of the wiſe ———
No more ———

Dacier anſwers, that Telemachus being fully aſſured that it is the real Ulyſſes, ſeems ſhocked at the indifference of Penelope. And indeed the warmth of the expreſſion is to be imputed to the emotion of the ſpeaker; ſo that we are not to look upon it as an outrage of decency towards Penelope, but a warm expoſtulation occaſioned by his zeal for Ulyſſes.

Pow'rleſs to ſpeak, I ſcarce uplift my eyes,
Nor dare to queſtion: doubts on doubts ariſe.
Oh deign he, if Ulyſſes, to remove
Theſe boding thoughts, and what he is to prove!
Pleas'd with her virtuous fears, the king replies,
Indulge, my ſon, the cautions of the wiſe;
Time ſhall the truth to ſure remembrance bring:
This garb of poverty belies the king;
No more.——This day our deepeſt care requires,
Cautious to act what thought mature inſpires.
If one man's blood, tho' mean, diſtain our hands,
The homicide retreats to foreign lands;

v. 116. *This garb of poverty belies the king.*] This expreſſion furniſhes another cauſe for the incredulity of Penelope; Ulyſſes imputes it to his diſguiſe, and is far from reſenting it as a want of conjugal affection. I muſt confeſs, that here may ſeem to be an unſeaſonable tranſition: Homer brings Ulyſſes and Penelope together, raiſes our expectations to ſee a warm and tender deſcription at the diſcovery of the huſband to the wife, and all of a ſudden he ſtarts from the ſubject, and leaves us under an uncertainty equal to that of Penelope. The ſcene cloſes too abruptly, and Homer acts like one who invites his gueſts to an entertainment, and when they were ſat down with an eager appetite, takes away their dinner. But then it may be anſwered, that the occaſion preſſes: Ulyſſes finds it neceſſary to provide for his own ſafety, before the people of Ithaca are informed of the ſlaughter of the ſuitors; this is the dictate of good ſenſe; he firſt acts the wiſe man, by guarding againſt an imminent danger; and then ſhews the tender huſband, by his affection to Penelope: and this is the reaſon why he adjourns the diſcovery. Beſides, this interval, which is very ſhort, gives time to Penelope to recollect her ſpirits from ſurpriſe, and makes her miſtreſs of her own thoughts. In that view the reader is to look upon this break, like a pauſe between the acts in a tragedy, and as an artful interruption to introduce the unravelling more naturally, and with greater probability.

v. 119. *If one man's blood* ————] Ulyſſes here argues very concluſively: if the perſon who has ſhed one man's blood only, and that man of inferiour ſtation; if he is yet obliged to fly into baniſhment, leſt he ſhould be ſlain by any of the dead perſons relations or friends; what have they to fear, who have not only ſlain one man, but above an hundred, and theſe not plebeians, but princes? They muſt neceſſarily have many avengers, who will be ready to purſue our lives.

But it may be objected, that Ulyſſes is a king, and therefore above apprehenſions of puniſhment. It is true Ulyſſes is a king,

By us, in heaps th' illuſtrious peerage falls,
Th' important deed our whole attention calls.
Be that thy care, Telemachus replies,
The world conſpires to ſpeak Ulyſſes wiſe;
For wiſdom all is thine! lo I obey,
And dauntleſs follow where you lead the way;
Nor ſhalt thou in the day of danger find
Thy coward ſon degen'rate lag behind.
Then inſtant to the bath, (the monarch cries)
Bid the gay youth and ſprightly virgins riſe,
Thence all deſcend in pomp and proud array,
And bid the dome reſound the mirthful lay;
While the ſweet lyriſt airs of rapture ſings,
And forms the dance reſponſive to the ſtrings.
That hence th' eluded paſſengers may ſay,
Lo! the queen weds! we hear the ſpouſal lay!

yet ſubject to the laws: his government was not ſo deſpotic, as to have no reaſon to fear the reſentments of the chief families of his ſubjects, whoſe heirs were ſlain by his hand. I cannot entirely agree with Dacier in this laſt ſentiment: Ulyſſes had only done an act of juſtice upon theſe offenders, and had tranſgreſſed no law by it, and ought therefore to apprehend no vengeance from the law. I ſhould rather aſcribe the apprehenſions of Ulyſſes, to a fear of a ſudden aſſault from the friends of the ſuitors, before he could diſcover himſelf to be the real Ulyſſes. He is afraid of an aſſaſſination, not a legal puniſhment; the rage of the people, not the juſtice of the law.

v. 122. *Th' important deed our whole attention calls.*] Ulyſſes to prove Telemachus, and to form a judgment of his wiſdom, aſks his advice upon the preſent emergency; but the poet, in his anſwer, obſerves a due decency: Telemachus pays a laudable deference to the ſuperiour wiſdom of Ulyſſes, and modeſtly ſubmits to his judgment. What we are to gather from this conduct is, that no perſon ſhould be ſo ſelf-confiding in his own judgment, as to deſpiſe that of other men, though thoſe men are inferiour in wiſdom.

v. 135. *That hence th' eluding paſſengers may ſay,*
Lo! the queen weds ————]

This is an inſtance of the art of Ulyſſes, eſſential to his character, and maintained through the whole Odyſſey. Euſtathius excellently explains the reaſon of this conduct: the ſuitors had been accuſtomed to retire from the palace, and ſleep in other places by night: it

The ſuitors death unknown, 'till we remove
Far from the court, and act inſpir'd by Jove.
Thus ſpoke the king: th' obſervant train obey,
At once they bathe, and dreſs in proud array:
The lyriſt ſtrikes the ſtring; gay youths advance,
And fair-zon'd damſels form the ſprightly dance.
The voice, attun'd to inſtrumental ſounds,
Aſcends the roof; the vaulted roof rebounds;
Not unobſerv'd: the Greeks eluded ſay
Lo! the queen weds! we hear the ſpouſal lay!
Inconſtant! to admit the bridal hour.
Thus they—but nobly chaſte ſhe weds no more.

would therefore have alarmed the whole city, and made them apprehenſive that ſome calamity had befallen them, if there had not appeared a ſeeming reaſon why they returned not to their ſeveral houſes as uſual; Ulyſſes therefore invents this ſtratagem to deceive them into an opinion that they ſtayed to celebrate the queen's nuptials. But there appears to be a ſtrong objection againſt this part of the relation: we have already ſeen the ſuitors ſlain, without being heard by the Ithacans of the city; is it then probable that the ſound of the muſic ſhould be heard abroad, when the cries, ſhouts, and groans, during the fight, were not heard out of the palace? Was the muſick louder then theſe united noiſes? It is not eaſy to ſolve this difficulty, unleſs we are allowed to imagine, that the more than uſual ſtay of the ſuitors in the palace had raiſed the curioſity of ſome of the Ithacans to enquire the reaſon of it; who conſequently approaching the palace might hear the muſic and dancing, and conclude that it was occaſioned by the queen's marriage. Beſides, in the ſtillneſs of the night, a lower ſound may be further heard, than one more loud, during the noiſe and hurry of the day: it being evident from the preceding book, that the fight was by day.

v. 137. ——— *'till we remove*
Far from the court ———]

It may be aſked what occaſions this receſs of Ulyſſes? Will he be better able to reſiſt his enemies in the country than in the city? The anſwer is, he withdraws that he may avoid the firſt reſentments of the Ithacans, upon the diſcovery of the death of the ſuitors: beſides, it is by this method in his power to conceal his perſon till the violence of the people is ſettled; or raiſe a party to reſiſt their efforts; at the worſt, he is certain to ſecure his flight, if his affairs ſhould be reduced to extremities.

Meanwhile the weary'd king the bath aſcends;
With faithful cares Eurynomè attends,
O'er ev'ry limb a ſhow'r of fragrance ſheds:
Then dreſt in pomp, magnificent he treads.
The warriour-goddeſs gives his frame to ſhine
With majeſty enlarg'd, and grace divine.
Back from his brows in wavy ringlets fly
His thick large locks, of hyacinthine dye.
As by ſome artiſt to whom Vulcan gives
His heav'nly ſkill, a breathing image lives
By Pallas taught, he frames the wond'rous mould,
And the pale ſilver glows with fuſil gold:
So Pallas his heroic form improves
With bloom divine, and like a god he moves;
More high he treads, and iſſuing forth in ſtate,
Radiant before his gazing conſort ſat.
And oh, my queen! he cries; what pow'r above
Has ſteel'd that heart, averſe to ſpouſal love!
Canſt thou, Penelope, when heav'n reſtores
Thy loſt Ulyſſes to his native ſhores,
Canſt thou, oh cruel! unconcern'd ſurvey
Thy loſt Ulyſſes, on this ſignal day?
Haſte, Euryclea, and diſpatchful ſpread
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed:

v. 171. ——— *diſpatchful ſpread*
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed.]

Theſe words have given occaſion of cenſure from Monſieur de la Mothe de Vayer: according to whom the precaution of Penelope is not much to be admired; "Ulyſſes made himſelf ſuſpicious by "expreſſing ſo much eagerneſs to go to bed with Penelope; ſhe "was ſo far from having time enough to know him, that ſhe had "ſcarce ſpoke three words to him, but he bluntly commands Eu-"ryclea to get the bed ready for them." So that, according to this author, Penelope miſtruſts his impatience; ſhe imagines the reaſon why he is ſo haſty, is becauſe he fears that a longer time would diſcover his impoſture, and fruſtrate his deſires. And indeed if Ulyſſes had given ſuch a command, the objection had not been without a foundation. But La Mothe is deceived: Ulyſſes does not aſk a bed for himſelf and Penelope, but for himſelf alone, be-

My weary nature craves the balm of reſt:
But heav'n with adamant has arm'd her breaſt.
Ah no! ſhe cries, a tender heart I bear,
A foe to pride; no adamant is there;
And now, ev'n now it melts! for ſure I ſee
Once more Ulyſſes my belov'd in thee!
Fix'd in my ſoul as when he ſail'd to Troy,
His image dwells: then haſte the bed of joy!
Haſte, from the bridal bow'r the bed tranſlate,
Fram'd by his hand, and be it dreſt in ſtate!
Thus ſpeaks the queen, ſtill dubious, with diſguiſe;
Touch'd at her words, the king with warmth replies,

cauſe his wife vouchſafed not to come near him, and uſed him with a ſeeming cruelty.

Ἀλλ᾽ ἄγε μοι, μαῖα, στόρεσον λέχος ὄφρα καὶ αὐτὸς
Λέξομαι ——— ———

which is literally enough rendered in the tranſlation,

Haſte, Euryclea, and diſpatchful ſpread
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed.

v. 175. *Ah no! ſhe cries, a tender heart I bear,*
A foe to pride; no adamant is there.]

It is not eaſy to tranſlate this paſſage literally.

——— ——— ὅτ᾽ ἄρτι μεγαλίζομαι, ὅσ᾽ ἀθερίζω,
Οὐδὲ λίην ἄγαμαι.

Euſtathius explains μεγαλίζομαι to ſignify, "I am not of a "proud heart;" ἀθερίζω, "I deſpiſe not your poverty;" ἄγαμαι, "I am no longer under an aſtoniſhment;" or ὐδὲ λίην ἐκπλήττομαι, "I ceaſe to be ſurpriſed at what I ſee and hear." Thus Penelope ſpeaks negatively, and the meaning of her words is, that ſhe is not influenced by pride and cruelty, to perſiſt in her incredulity, but by a laudable care and caution. Euſtathius propoſes Penelope as a pattern to all women upon the like occaſion; her own eyes perſuade her that the perſon with whom ſhe confers is Ulyſſes; Euryclea acknowledges her maſter; Telemachus his father; yet ſhe dares not immediately credit her own eyes, Euryclea, or Telemachus: and the ſame author concludes with a pretty obſervation, that Ulyſſes found it eaſier to ſubdue above an hundred enemies, than the diffidence and incredulity of Penelope.

v. 183. *Thus ſpeaks the queen, ſtill dubious* ———] It muſt be allowed that this is a very artful turn of thought in Penelope.

Alas for this! what mortal ſtrength can move
Th' enormous burthen, who but heav'n above?

Ulyſſes commands a bed to he prepared, Penelope catches the word, and ſeeming to conſent, orders Euryclea to carry the bed out of the bridal apartment, and prepare it. Now this bed was of ſuch a nature as to be inwrought into the ſubſtance of the apartment itſelf, and could not be removed: if therefore Ulyſſes had acquieſced in the injunction given by Penelope, and not diſcovered the impoſſibility of it, ſhe might very juſtly have concluded him an impoſtor, being manifeſtly ignorant of the ſecret of his own marriage bed.

But Euſtathius ſtarts an objection againſt this whole proceſs of the diſcovery, which he calls inſolvable; and indeed if Homer fails in the unravelling of his poem, he is to be ſeverely blamed: Tully is of this opinion. "Illic enim debet toto animo a poetâ in diſſo-"lutionem nodi agi; eaque præcipua fabulæ pars eſt, quæ requi-"rit diligentiam." The difficulty raiſed by Euſtathius is as follows: Penelope imagines that the perſon who pretends to be her huſband, is not really Ulyſſes, but a god, who not only aſſumes his form, but, to favour the impoſture, the reſemblance of the wound received from the boar; now if he be a god, how is it poſſible ſhe ſhould conceive him to be ignorant of the ſecret of the marriage bed, and conſequently how can ſhe be convinced of the reality of Ulyſſes from his knowledge of it, when it muſt neceſſarily be known to a god, as well as to the real Ulyſſes? All that ſhe ought to gather from it is, that the perſon with whom ſhe ſpeaks is Ulyſſes, or a god. Euſtathius replies, that Penelope, upon the diſcovery of the ſecret makes no ſcruple to yield; becauſe whether it be Ulyſſes, or a god, her caſe is happy; if he proves to be Ulyſſes, ſhe has her wiſhes; if a god, it is no ſmall piece of good fortune. Dacier condemns this ſolution, and tells us, that Penelope was ſo faithful to her huſband, that ſhe would not have received even a god in the place of Ulyſſes: the true anſwer (continues that author) is to be drawn from the pagan theology, according to which the inferiour deities were ſuppoſed to have a finite knowledge, and conſequently Penelope might think the diſcovery of the nuptial bed a full conviction of the reality of Ulyſſes, it being ſo great a ſecret that even a god might be ignorant of it. But this is all fancy; for allowing this perſon to be a god, why might not Penelope imagine him to be a deity of the ſuperiour order, and for that reaſon well acquainted with the ſecrets of this nuptial bower? eſpecially becauſe Jupiter himſelf was notorious for ſuch amorous illuſions. Dacier herſelf confeſſes this to be no juſt ſolution, but gives a very different reaſon: how is it poſſible (ſays ſhe) that this bed and whole apartment ſhould be built by the ſingle hand of Ulyſſes, without being ſeen by any perſon while he builds it? or how can any one be aſſured that a ſecret that is known to a third perſon (Actoris) is not through weakneſs or intereſt diſcovered to others? It is true the manner of the diſcovery entirely depends upon the

It mocks the weak attempts of human hands;
But the whole earth muſt move, if heav'n commands.

choice of the poet; but I could wiſh that he had choſen a method more probable than this of the nuptial bed, which in my judgment (continues the ſame author) is unworthy of the Odyſſey. I am perſuaded that this is one of the places where (as Horace writes) Homer nods.

I will lay together what occurs to me by way of reply. The firſt objection is, that Penelope imagines Ulyſſes to be a god, and conſequently his knowledge of the nuptial bed ought not to have induced her to believe him to be the real Ulyſſes. The anſwer is, Penelope thought him a god only during her firſt tranſport; it is to be imputed to her ſurpriſe, that ſhe at all thinks him a deity. This is very evident, for from the moment ſhe ſaw him, the thought of his divinity vaniſhes, and ſhe never mentions one word concerning ſuch a ſuppoſition, nay from the firſt glance ſhe almoſt believes him to be the real Ulyſſes.

O'er all the man her eyes ſhe rolls in vain,
Now hopes, now fears, now knows, then doubts again.

She is ſo far from thinking him a deity, that ſhe is almoſt perſuaded that he is her huſband. If this be allowed, the firſt difficulty ceaſes: for granting her belief that the perſon before her is a real man, and no man but Ulyſſes was acquainted with the nuptial bed; it follows, that this man is the real Ulyſſes, and that this incident is not ill choſen by the poet, in the diſcovery of Ulyſſes.

Dacier objects, that this apartment could not poſſibly be erected without being known to other perſons; but we have ſeen Ulyſſes build a ſhip in a ſolitary iſland, without the aſſiſtance of any man, in the fifth Odyſſey; and why may he not then be allowed to do the ſame, with reſpect to this nuptial bower? All kinds of arts in mechanics were antiently practiſed by the greateſt perſonages, and their knowledge and dexterity in them was eſteemed a glory. This conſideration may perhaps reconcile the reader to this part of the diſcovery.

The only difficulty that now remains is this: Actoris, a female ſervant, is allowed to be in the ſecret; how then can Penelope be aſſured that ſhe has not betrayed it? Homer himſelf obviates this objection; he has in a very ſolemn manner told us, that only twelve of all the female train were guilty of a breach of truſt, and therefore Penelope may ſafely rely upon the fidelity of Actoris. Beſides, it adds no ſmall weight to this vindication of Homer, to obſerve, that the whole procedure of the diſcovery is accidental; how could Ulyſſes foreknow that the proof of his veracity would depend upon his knowledge of the bridal bower; and conſequently it is not to be imagined that he ſhould have made any clandeſtine enquiries

Then hear ſure evidence, while we diſplay
Words ſeal'd with ſacred truth, and truth obey:
This hand the wonder fram'd; an olive ſpread
Full in the court its ever verdant head.
Vaſt as ſome mighty column's bulk, on high
The huge trunk roſe, and heav'd into the ſky;

about it: It may be added, that Ulyſſes has been no more than five days upon the Ithacan ſhores, and probably had never ſeen Actoris, who alone was acquainted with the nature of this bed: no perſon was antiently permitted to enter the women's apartment, but fathers, huſbands, or brothers; this therefore was the greateſt ſecret in all families; this ſecret Penelope propoſes in the trial of Ulyſſes, and upon his knowledge of it receives him as her huſband. To inſtance almoſt in a parallel caſe; Oreſtes in Euripides tells Iphigenia, that the lance which Pelops uſed in the combat againſt Ænomaus was lodged in her apartment; this circumſtance convinces her that the perſon who knew this ſecret muſt be her brother Oreſtes, no perſons of a more diſtant relation being admitted into ſuch privacies.

v. 193. *Vaſt as ſome mighty column's bulk, on high*
The huge trunk roſe ———]

I will not promiſe that the reader will be pleaſed with this deſcription of the nuptial bower: the Greek is noble, and the words ſounding and harmonious; an happineſs that is wanting in our language. In this and the like caſes the tranſlator muſt ſay with Lucretius upon a like occaſion,

" ——— Graiorum obſcura reperta
" Difficile illuſtrare Latinis verſibus eſſe,
" Propter Egeſtatem linguæ, & rerum novitatem."

Beſides, it muſt be allowed that the relation itſelf is very wonderful; for it is not eaſy to conceive that the bole of an olive tree ſhould be ſo large as to contain upon the dimenſions of it a whole bedſtead. I would willingly imagine that it is only a ſupporter of it. It is likewiſe ſomewhat extraordinary that this olive tree is not felled, or cut up from the roots; for Euſtathius informs us, that προτάμων ſignifies "to cut aſunder at ſome diſtance from the "earth;" ſo that a great part of the trunk is left ſtanding, upon which Ulyſſes builds his bridal bed. What occurs to me upon this incident is, that Homer muſt be imagined to write according to the cuſtoms of the age in which he lived, unleſs we can ſuppoſe he unneceſſarily invented an abſurdity. I therefore doubt not but there were antiently ſuch beds as this of Ulyſſes. Beſides, the more wonderful this bed is, the better it ſerves for the purpoſe of Homer, in convincing us that the perſon, who was acquainted with

Around the tree I rais'd a nuptial bow'r
And roof'd defenſive of the ſtorm and ſhow'r;
The ſpacious valve, with art inwrought, conjoins;
And the fair dome with poliſh'd marble ſhines.
I lopp'd the branchy head; aloft in twain
Sever'd the bole, and ſmooth'd the ſhining grain;
Then poſts, capacious of the frame, I raiſe,
And bore it, regular, from ſpace to ſpace:
Athwart the frame, at equal diſtance lie
Thongs of tough hides, that boaſt a purple dye;
Then poliſhing the whole, the finiſh'd mould
With ſilver ſhone, with elephant, and gold.
But if o'erturn'd by rude, ungovern'd hands,
Or ſtill inviolate the olive ſtands,
'Tis thine, oh queen, to ſay: and now impart,
If fears remain, or doubts diſtract thy heart?

While yet he ſpeaks, her pow'rs of life decay,
She ſickens, trembles, falls, and faints away:
At length recov'ring, to his arms ſhe flew,
And ſtrain'd him cloſe, as to his breaſt ſhe grew:
The tears pour'd down amain: and oh, ſhe cries,
Let not againſt thy ſpouſe thine anger riſe!
O vers'd in every turn of human art,
Forgive the weakneſs of a woman's heart!
The righteous pow'rs that mortal lots diſpoſe,
Decree us to ſuſtain a length of woes,

a matter ſo uncommon, muſt be the real Ulyſſes, and not an impoſtor: it is for this purpoſe that the poet deſcribes the bower built round the olive tree, before the framing of the bed is at all mentioned.

> Around the tree I rais'd a nuptial bow'r,
> And roof'd defenſive of the ſtorm and ſhow'r;
> Then lopp'd the branchy head; aloft in twain
> Sever'd the bole, and ſmooth'd the ſhining grain.

This, I ſay, is particularly deſcribed by Homer, to convince us that the place where the bed ſtood was entirely ſecret; it being cloſed up from obſervation before this particular apartment was undertaken, and therfore the knowledge of it was a ſtrong argument that the perſon who was acquainted with it muſt be the real Ulyſſes.

And from the flow'r of life, the bliſs deny
To bloom together, fade away, and die.
O let me, let me not thine anger move,
That I forbore, thus, thus, to ſpeak my love;
Thus in fond kiſſes, while the tranſport warms,
Pour out my ſoul, and die within thy arms!
I dreaded fraud! Men, faithleſs men, betray
Our eaſy faith, and make the ſex their prey:
Againſt the fondneſs of my heart I ſtrove,
'Twas caution, oh my lord! not want of love:
Like me had Helen fear'd, with wanton charms
Ere the fair miſchief ſet two worlds in arms;

v. 231. *Like me had Helen fear'd*———] This paſſage occaſioned great diſputes amongſt the ancient critics; ſome contended for the common punctuation; others thus read it,

Εἰ ἤδη, —— ——

Then the meaning of the paſſage is thus to be underſtood. Helen would not have yielded to a ſtranger, if ſhe had known that ſtranger, εἰ ἤδη, ἀνδρὰ is to be underſtood according to this interpretation. The ſame critics thus conſtrue the following words,

Ὅ μιν αὖτις ἀρήϊοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν.

Ὅ is the ſame with διὰ ὅ, "propter hanc cauſam," and the whole paſſage is thus to be tranſlated; "If Helen had known the ſtranger, "ſhe would not have yielded to him; therefore the Greeks roſe in "arms to free her from the impoſtor." They defend this application by having recourſe to a tradition, that Paris could never have obtained the conſent of Helen if Venus had not given him the reſemblance of Menelaus, in whoſe form he prevailed upon that fatal beauty: otherwiſe the inſtance is no way parallel; for if Helen was not deceived, how can her example be brought to induce Penelope to act with caution, leſt ſhe take an impoſtor to her bed inſtead of an huſband? I confeſs this conſtruction of the Greek appears to me very obſcure; contrary to the ſtyle of Homer, which is always clear and natural. Beſides, it contradicts the whole ſtory of Helen through the Iliad and Odyſſey, and ſhe herſelf no where alledges this deceit as her excuſe, but frequently condemns her own conduct in forſaking the bed of Menelaus. But granting that ſhe was thus deceived originally, the deceit muſt neceſſarily ſoon diſappear, and yet ſhe voluntarily cohabits many years with Paris. The other interpretation may therefore perhaps be preferable; namely, if Helen had conſidered what evils might enſue from her injury to Menelaus, ſhe would have acted more wiſely: this Penelope in-

Ere Greece roſe dreadful in th' avenging day;
Thus had ſhe fear'd, ſhe had not gone aſtray.
But heav'n, averſe to Greece, in wrath decreed
That ſhe ſhould wander, and that Greece ſhould bleed:
Blind to the ills that from injuſtice flow,
She colour'd all our wretched lives with woe.
But why theſe ſorrows when my lord arrives?
I yield, I yield! my own Ulyſſes lives!
The ſecrets of the bridal bed are known
To thee, to me, to Actoris alone,
(My father's preſent in the ſpouſal hour,
The ſole attendant on our genial bow'r)
Since what no eye has ſeen thy tongue reveal'd,
Hard and diſtruſtful as I am, I yield.
Touch'd to the ſoul the king with rapture hears,
Hangs round her neck, and ſpeaks his joy in tears.
As to the ſhipwreck'd mariner, the ſhores
Delightful riſe, when angry Neptune roars;
Then, when the ſurge in thunder mounts the ſky,
And gulf'd in crouds at once the ſailors die;
If one more happy, while the tempeſt raves,
Out-lives the tumult of conflicting waves,
All pale, with ooze deform'd, he views the ſtrand,
And plunging forth with tranſport graſps the land.
The raviſh'd queen with equal rapture glows,
Claſps her lov'd lord, and to his boſom grows.
Nor had they ended till the morning ray:
But Pallas backward held the riſing day,

troduces to vindicate her conduct in acting with ſo much caution; ſhe oppoſes her warineſs to the inconſiderateneſs of Helen, and aſcribes all the calamities of Greece to it.

v. 260. *But Pallas backward held the riſing day.*] We are not to look upon this merely as a poetical ornament, there is no neceſſity for it. The battle between the ſuitors and Ulyſſes happened in the evening; ſince then we have ſeen the palace purified, the dead ſuitors carried away, and the female ſervants puniſhed; Euryclea has held a long conference with Penelope, there has been ſinging and dancing in the palace, and an interview at large deſcribed be-

The wheels of night retarding, to detain
The gay Aurora in the wavy main:
Whoſe flaming ſteeds, emerging thro' the night,
Beam o'er the eaſtern hills with ſtreaming light.
At length Ulyſſes with a ſigh replies:
Yet fate, yet cruel fate repoſe denies;
A labour long, and hard, remains behind;
By heav'n above, by hell beneath enjoin'd:
For, to Tireſias thro' th' eternal gates
Of hell I trod, to learn my future fates.
But end we here——the night demands repoſe,
Be deck'd the couch! and peace awhile, my woes!
To whom the queen. Thy word we ſhall obey,
And deck the couch; far hence be woes away;
Since the juſt gods, who tread the ſtarry plains
Reſtore thee ſafe, ſince my Ulyſſes reigns.
But what thoſe perils heav'n decrees, impart;
Knowledge may grieve, but fear diſtracts the heart.

tween Ulyſſes and Penelope; then the poet proceeds to recapitulate the ſtory of the whole Odyſſey: now all theſe incidents could not be comprehended in the compaſs of one night: Homer therefore, to reconcile it to probability, introduces Minerva to protract it, and make the time proportionable to the incidents. But perhaps it may be thought a violent machine, and contrary to the eſtabliſhed laws of nature, to ſuppoſe the courſe of the night alterable: the anſwer is, poets are allowed to write according to common fame, and what Homer here relates could not ſhock the ears of the antients, who had before heard of the like ſtory at the conception of Hercules. I will only obſerve that Homer gives no more than two horſes to Aurora's chariot, Lampus and Phaethon; whereas the chariot of the ſun is deſcribed with four: thus Ovid,

"Interea volucres Pyroeis, Eous, & Æthon,
"Solis equi, quartuſque Phlegon."

v. 278. *Knowledge may grieve, but fear diſtracts the heart.*] Ulyſſes had ſaid in the ſentence immediately preceding,

A labour long, and hard, remains.

This could not fail of alarming Penelope, and raiſing all her curioſity to know it. Homer would greatly have offended againſt nature, if he had not deſcribed her under an impatience upon the

To this the king. Ah why muſt I diſcloſe
A dreadful ſtory of approaching woes?
Why in this hour of tranſport wound thy ears,
When thou muſt learn what I muſt ſpeak with tears?
Heav'n by the Theban ghoſt, thy ſpouſe decrees
Torn from thy arms, to ſail a length of ſeas;
From realm to realm a nation to explore
Who ne'er knew ſalt, or heard the billows roar,
Nor ſaw gay veſſel ſtem the ſurgy plain,
A painted wonder, flying on the main;
An oar my hand muſt bear; a ſhepherd eyes
The unknown inſtrument with ſtrange ſurpriſe,
And calls a corn-van: this upon the plain
I fix, and hail the monarch of the main;
Then bathe his altars with the mingled gore
Of victims vow'd, a ram, a bull, a boar:
Thence ſwift re-ſailing to my native ſhores,
Due victims ſlay to all th' ætherial pow'rs.
Then heav'n decrees in peace to end my days,
And ſteal myſelf from life by ſlow decays;

mention of it; her fondneſs is too ſincere to be indifferent upon ſuch a ſuggeſtion, but her anſwer to Ulyſſes chiefly demands obſervation.

If heav'n a kind releaſe from ills foreſhows;
Triumph, thou happy victor of thy woes!

This diſcovers a greatneſs of ſpirit worthy of a queen and heroine: ſhe is threatened to loſe Ulyſſes by a ſecond abſence, ſhe is alarmed with a new train of his ſufferings; but being informed that all theſe calamities will end in a proſperous iſſue, that long life and happineſs attend, him ſhe not only takes courage perſonally, but comforts her huſband. Homer was too good a judge of decency to aſcribe the weakneſs that attends the generality of that ſex to Penelope; ſhe has a bravery of ſoul worthy of a heroine in epic poetry. Beſides, this is a further inſtance of Homer's judgment; the event of the Odyſſey is to ſhew Ulyſſes happy; now if the poet had not fully ſatisfied the reader in this reſpect, he had not reinſtated his hero in proſperity, and conſequently had defeated the moral of the Odyſſey, which is to ſhew wiſdom and virtue triumphant, by repreſenting his hero after all difficulties ſettled in full tranquillity.

Unknown to pain in age reſign my breath,
When late ſtern Neptune points the ſhaft of death;
To the dark grave retiring as to reſt;
My people bleſſing, by my people bleſt.
Such future ſcenes th' all-righteous pow'rs diſplay,
By their dread * ſeer, and ſuch my future day.
To whom thus firm of ſoul: If ripe for death,
And full of days, thou gently yield thy breath:
While heav'n a kind releaſe from ills foreſhows;
Triumph, thou happy victor of thy woes!
But Euryclea with diſpatchful care,
And ſage Eurynomè, the couch prepare:
Inſtant they bid the blazing torch diſplay
Around the dome an artificial day;
Then to repoſe her ſteps the matron bends,
And to the queen Eurynomè deſcends;
A torch ſhe bears to light with guiding fires
The royal pair; ſhe guides them, and retires.
Then inſtant his fair ſpouſe Ulyſſes led
To the chaſte love-rites of the nuptial bed.

* Tireſias.

v. 317. ——— *his fair ſpouſe Ulyſſes led*
To the chaſte love-rites of the nuptial bed.]

The reader may be pleaſed to conſult the annotations on book xi. v. 152, &c. concerning the anſwer of Ulyſſes to Penelope; it being a repetition from that part of the Odyſſey.

Euſtathius informs us, that Ariſtarchus, and Ariſtophanes the grammarian, thought the verſe quoted at the head of this remark, to be the concluſion of the Odyſſey, and conſequently they judged the remaining part of this book, and the whole xxivth, ſuppoſitious: thoſe who were of a contrary opinion replied, that by ending the poem with that verſe, many incidents of great importance would be rejected: for inſtance, the recapitulation of the whole Odyſſey, and eſpecially the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to his father Laertes, with all the beautiful fictions contained in it. They add, that if the little relation that the beginning of that book bears to the ſubject of the poem, be a reaſon for the rejection of it, we muſt for the ſame reaſon abridge the poem, and reject a multitude of the fables which are ſcattered through the whole courſe of it. It may therefore be conjectured that Ariſtarchus and Ariſtophanes were

And now the blooming youths and ſprightly fair
Ceaſe the gay dance, and to their reſt repair; 320

not of opinion that the poem ended with this verſe, but only the moſt neceſſary and important incidents. Caſaubon, in a remark upon a paſſage of Strabo, favours the opinion of Ariſtarchus, for he there ſpeaks of the laſt book as if he ſuſpected it to be ſpurious; and Rapin joins in the ſame judgment. Homer is to be defended in another manner, than by ſuch arguments as are brought in anſwer to Ariſtarchus. The ſame objection has been made againſt the two laſt books of the Iliad, as againſt theſe of the Odyſſey; the former ought to have ended with the deciſive action in the death of Hector, and the latter with the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Penelope, when his happineſs ſeems to be eſtabliſhed. But there is no weight in theſe objections. There is a difference between the "unravel-"ling" of the action, and the full "accompliſhment of it;" the action is unravelled by the death of the ſuitors, but there are conſequences ariſing from their deaths that hinder the accompliſhment of the action, namely, the danger of the reſentments of their friends who riſe in arms to revenge their ſlaughter; and till their inſurrection is pacified, Ulyſſes cannot be ſaid to be in a ſtate of ſecurity. The ſubject of the Iliad is the anger of Achilles: that of the Odyſſey, the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes in his dominions: now the anger of Achilles ends not with the death of Hector, nor is Ulyſſes fully re-eſtabliſhed by the death of the ſuitors; he has another obſtacle to overcome, and till the commotions of the Ithacans are appeaſed, the deſign of the poem is not executed, which is to ſhew Ulyſſes in peaceful poſſeſſion of his palace and authority. We ſee in this very book, that Ulyſſes is forced to fly from his own palace; can he then be ſaid to be re-eſtabliſhed in tranquillity? This very action demonſtrates, that what follows is part of the ſubject of the poem, and ſuch a part, as, if it had not been related, would have given us room to have imagined that Homer had never finiſhed it, or that the concluſion of it had been loſt. The beginning of the action is his ſailing from Troy toward his country; the middle contains all the calamities he ſuſtains in his return, the diſorders of his family before and after it; and the end of the action is his re-eſtabliſhment in the peaceful poſſeſſion of his kingdoms, when he is acknowledged by his wife father, family, and ſubjects: now this is not compleated till the very end of the laſt book, and conſequently that book is not ſpurious, but eſſential. The poet had ended very injudiciouſly, if he had ſtopped before; for the reader would have remained unſatisfied in two neceſſary points, viz. how he was made known to Laertes, and what vengeance the chief families of the nation endeavoured to take againſt the deſtroyer of their ſons; but this ſtorm being once blown over, and all his ſubjects who had taken arms being either vanquiſhed or appeaſed, the action is compleated in all its parts, and conſummates the Odyſſey.

But in diſcourſe the king and conſort lay,
While the ſoft hours ſtole unperceiv'd away;
Intent he hears Penelope diſcloſe
A mournful ſtory of domeſtic woes,

v. 324. *A mournful ſtory of domeſtic woes.*] It is with great judgment that the poet paſſes thus briefly over the ſtory of Penelope; he makes her impatience to hear the hiſtory of Ulyſſes the pretended occaſion of her conciſeneſs; the true reaſon is, he is unwilling to tire his reader by repeating what he already knows: it is likewiſe remarkable, that Ulyſſes does not begin his own adventures by a detail of his ſufferings during the war of Troy; for this would have been foreign to the deſign of the Odyſſey; but with his ſailing from Troy to the Cicons, and enters directly into the ſubject of it. He likewiſe concludes an epitome of the whole Odyſſey in the compaſs of one and thirty lines: and purpoſely contracts it, becauſe we are already acquainted with the whole relation.

Lycophron has given us a ſummary of the wanderings of Ulyſſes; which if any one is deſirous to compare with this of Homer, he will ſee the difference between a clear and an obſcure writer. Tibullus, in his Panegyric on Meſſala, has been more ſucceſsful than Lycophron, he follows the order of Homer, and treads directly in his footſteps.

" Nam Ciconumque manus adverſis repulit armis,
" Non valuit Lotos captos avertere curſus;
" Ceſſit & Etnææ Neptunius incola rupis,
" Victa Maronæo fœdatus lumina Baccho,
" Vexit & Æolios placidam per Nerea ventos;
" Incultos adiit Læſtrygonas," &c.

Dacier is of opinion, that this recapitulation in Homer has a very good effect. I will tranſlate her obſervation. We learn from it, that the ſubject of the Odyſſey is not alone the return of Ulyſſes to his country, and his re-eſtabliſhment in it; but that it comprehends all his wanderings and all his voyages; all that he ſaw, or ſuffered in his retu n to it; in a word, all that he underwent after he ſet ſail from the ſhores of Troy: another advantage we reap from it is, that we ſee the order and train of the adventures of his hero, as they really happened, naturally and hiſtorically: for in his relation of them in his poem, he uſes an artificial order; that is, he begins at the latter end, and finds an opportunity to inſert all that precedes the opening of his poem by way of narration to the Phæacians: here he ſets every event in its natural order, ſo that with a glance of the eye we may diſtinguiſh what gives continuity to the action, and what is comprehended in it. By this method we are able to ſeparate the time of the duration of the poem, from the time of the duration of the action; for in reality the poem begins many years before the return of Ulyſſes; but Homer begins his action but thirty-five days before he lands in his own

His ſervants inſults, his invaded bed,
How his whole flocks and herds exhauſted bled,
His generous wines diſhonour'd ſhed in vain,
And the wild riots of the ſuitor-train.
The king alternate a dire tale relates,
Of wars, of triumphs, and diſaſtrous fates;
All he unfolds: his liſt'ning ſpouſe turns pale
With pleaſing horrour at the dreadful tale;
Sleepleſs devours each word; and hears, how ſlain
Cicons on Cicons ſwell th' enſanguin'd plain;
How to the land of Lote unbleſt he ſails;
And images the rills, and flow'ry vales!
How daſh'd like dogs, his friends the Cyclops tore,
(Not unreveng'd) and quaff'd the ſpouting gore;
How the loud ſtorms in priſon bound, he ſails
From friendly Æolus with proſp'rous gales;
Yet fate withſtands! a ſudden tempeſt roars
And whirls him groaning from his native ſhores:
How on the barb'rous Læſtrigonian coaſt,
By ſavage hands his fleet and friends he loſt;
How ſcarce himſelf ſurviv'd: he paints the bow'r,
The ſpells of Circe, and her magic pow'r;
His dreadful journey to the realms beneath,
To ſeek Tireſias in the vales of death;
How in the doleful manſions he ſurvey'd
His royal mother, pale Anticlea's ſhade;
And friends in battle ſlain, heroic ghoſts!
Then how unharm'd he paſt the Siren-coaſts,
The juſtling rocks where fierce Charybdis raves,
And howling Scylla whirls her thund'rous waves,
The cave of death! How his companions ſlay
The oxen ſacred to the god of day,

country. In the courſe therefore of the Odyſſey, Homer gave us the artificial, here the natural order; which is an eaſe and aſſiſtance to the memory of the reader.

v. 355. ——— *How his companions ſlay*
The oxen ſacred to the god of day.]

'Till Jove in wrath the rattling tempeſt guides,
And whelms th' offenders in the roaring tides:
How ſtruggling thro' the ſurge, he reach'd the ſhores
Of fair Ogygia, and Calypſo's bow'rs; 360

The ſtory of theſe oxen is fully related, lib. xii. I refer to the annotations. The crime of the companions of Ulyſſes was ſacrilege, they having deſtroyed the herds ſacred to a god. Theſe herds were ſaid to be immortal: I have there given the reaſon of it, but too conciſely, and will therefore add a ſupplement from the Polyhymnia of Herodotus; I ought to have mentioned, that the body of ſoldiers called immortal, was a ſelect number of men in the army of Xerxes: ſo named, becauſe upon the death of any one of their number, whether by war or ſickneſs, another was immediately ſubſtituted into his room, ſo that they never amounted to more or leſs than ten thouſand. If we apply this piece of hiſtory to the herds of Apollo, it excellently explains Homer's poetry: they are called immortal, becauſe upon the death of any one of the whole herd, another was brought into its place; they are ſaid neither to increaſe nor decay, becauſe they were always of a fixed number, and continually ſupplied upon any vacancy.

The reader will be apprized of the heinouſneſs of the crime in killing theſe oxen, from an obſervation of Bochart, p. 314. The Phœnicians and Ægyptians ſo ſuperſtitiouſly abſtained from the fleſh of the ox, that, as Porphyry affirms, they would ſooner feed upon human fleſh than that of ſuch beaſts. Ælian tells us, that it was death amongſt the Phrygians to kill a labouring ox; and Varro, Ruſt. lib. ii. c. 5. thus writes; "ab hoc antiqui manus "ita abſtineri voluerunt, ut capite ſanxerint, ſi quis occidiſſet." Thus alſo Columella, in Præfat. lib. vii. "Cujus tanta fuit apud "antiquos veneratio, ut tam capitale eſſet bovem necâſſe, quam "civem."

I have been the more full upon this head, to ſhew that Homer's fiction is built upon a foundation of truth, and that he writes according to the religion of the antients: Rapin is very ſevere upon him for aſcribing the death of the companions of Ulyſſes, to the violation of theſe herds of Apollo. "The reaſon (ſays he) why "they are deſtroyed is very ridiculous, becauſe, lib. i.

——— ——— they dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day.

"This is certainly a far-fetch'd deſtruction: the hero or the poet "was willing to be freed from them." But from this obſervation, they will be found to be guilty of ſacrilege, and a violation of what was regarded by the world with the utmoſt veneration; and conſequently the crime is adequate to the puniſhment. Be-

Where the gay blooming nymph conſtrain'd his ſtay,
With ſweet reluctant amorous delay;
And promis'd, vainly promis'd, to beſtow,
Immortal life exempt from age and woe;
How ſav'd from ſtorms Phæacia's coaſt he trod,
By great Alcinous honour'd as a god,
Who gave him laſt his country to behold,
With change of raiment, braſs, and heaps of gold.
He ended, ſinking into ſleep, and ſhares
A ſweet forgetfulneſs of all his cares.
Soon as ſoft ſlumber eas'd the toils of day,
Minerva ruſhes thro' th' aerial way,
And bids Aurora with her golden wheels
Flame from the ocean o'er the eaſtern hills:
Uproſe Ulyſſes from the genial bed,
And thus with thought mature the monarch ſaid.
My queen, my conſort! thro' a length of years,
We drank the cup of ſorrow mix'd with tears,
Thou, for thy lord; while me th' immortal pow'rs
Detain'd reluctant from my native ſhores.

ſides, Horace, Epiſt. lib. i. gives ſentence againſt theſe companions of Ulyſſes.

——— ——— "Cærite cerâ
"Digni, remigium vitioſum Ithacenſis Ulyſſei;
"Cui potior patriâ fuit interdicta voluptas."

v. 361. *Where the gay blooming nymph conſtrain'd his ſtay.*] This is a circumſtance (obſerves Madam Dacier) that Ulyſſes ought by no means to forget; for it gives him an opportunity to pay an high compliment to his wife, by letting her know he preferred her perſon to that of Calypſo a goddeſs: this is the reaſon why he enlarges upon it in five verſes; whereas he concludes moſt of the other adventures in little more than one. But (adds that lady) we may eaſily believe that he was ſilent about the nature of his converſation with that nymph; and indeed it would have leſſened the compliment, and perhaps his welcome home, if he had not been able to keep a ſecret; he is very cautious in this reſpect; he enlarges upon the fondneſs of Calypſo for his perſon, but ſuppreſſes, for a very obvious reaſon, the kind returns he made for her civilities.

Now, bleſt again by heav'n, the queen diſplay,
And rule our palace with an equal ſway:
Be it my care, by loans, or martial toils,
To throng my empty folds, with gifts or ſpoils.
But now I haſte to bleſs Laertes' eyes
With ſight of his Ulyſſes ere he dies;
The good old man to waſting woes a prey,
Weeps a ſad life in ſolitude away.
But hear, tho' wife! This morning ſhall unfold
The deathful ſcene, on heroes, heroes roll'd;
Thou with thy maids within the palace ſtay,
From all the ſcene of tumult far away!
He ſpoke, and ſheath'd in arms, inceſſant flies
To wake his ſon; and bid his friends ariſe.
To arms! aloud he cries: his friends obey,
With glitt'ring arms their manly limbs array,
And paſs the city-gate; Ulyſſes leads the way.
Now flames the roſy dawn, but Pallas ſhrouds
The latent warriours in a veil of clouds.

v. 398. ——————— *Pallas ſhrouds*
The latent warriours in a veil of clouds.]

Ulyſſes, to avoid obſervation, leaves the city at the point of day, before the darkneſs was quite diſpelled; this is the ſuggeſtion of his own wiſdom, which is figured by Minerva.

This book ends in the morning of the forty-firſt day. There are but few verſes in the tranſlation, more than in Homer: I ſpeak it not as if this were a beauty, it may as well be a fault; our heroic verſe conſiſts but of ten ſyllables, the Greek oftentimes of ſeventeen, as in this verſe,

Αὖτις ἔπειτα πέδονδε κυλίνδετο λᾶας ἀναιδής.

We therefore write with the diſadvantage of ſeven ſyllables, which makes it generally impoſſible to comprehend the ſenſe of one line in Homer within the compaſs of one line in a tranſlation, with any tolerable beauty; but in ſome parts, where the ſubject ſeemed to hang heavy, this has been attempted; with what ſucceſs, muſt be left to the reader.

THE ODYSSEY.

* BOOK XXIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The ſouls of the ſuitors are conducted by Mercury to the infernal ſhades. Ulyſſes in the country goes to the retirement of his father Laertes; he finds him buſied in his garden all alone: the manner of his diſcovery to him is beautifully deſcribed. They return together to his lodge, and the king is acknowledged by Dolius and the ſervants. The Ithacenſians, led by Eupithes the father of Antinous, riſe againſt Ulyſſes, who gives them battle, in which Eupithes is killed by Laertes: and the goddeſs Pallas makes a laſting peace between Ulyſſes and his ſubjects, which concludes the Odyſſey.

CYLLENIUS now to Pluto's dreary reign
Conveys the dead, a lamentable train!
The golden wand, that cauſes ſleep to fly,
Or in ſoft ſlumber ſeals the wakeful eye,

* It has been already proved, that this book is the genuine work of Homer; but perhaps the reader may not be diſpleaſed to ſee the reaſons why it was rejected by ſo great a critic as Ariſtarchus: I ſhall therefore lay them before him from Didymus and Spondanus.

Ariſtarchus affirms, that this is the only place in Homer where Mercury performs the office of conducting the ſouls of the dead; and that there is no proof he was known ſo early by the title of ψυχοπομπὸς; that this is the only paſſage where he is called Cyllenius; that the ceremony of his guiding the ſouls is contrary to other deſcriptions of Homer, where they all deſcend without a guide into the manſions of the dead, even before the funeral rites. That it is abſurd to imagine a "white rock" in theſe kingdoms of darkneſs, &c. To theſe Didymus thus replies. If a ſingle

That drives the ghosts to realms of night or day; 5
Points out the long, uncomfortable way.

mention of any incident in Homer were a reason for its rejection, abundance of passages must be rejected. He thinks it a sufficient argument, that Mercury was called Ψυχοπομπὸς, and Cyllenius, in the days of Homer, that he is here mentioned under these titles; but this is begging the question. He adds, that although the souls of the dead descend without a guide in other places, this hinders not but they may descend with one; for they are in other places only said in general to descend, whereas here the manner of their descent is particularized. Neither is it any objection against this book, to say that it is contrary to the manner of Homer to describe the shades of the dead received immediately into the state of Achilles, Agamemnon, &c. before the performance of their funeral ceremonies; this (says he) is a favour granted by Mercury to Ulysses, who was descended from that deity, he being the father of Arcisius, and consequently great grandfather to Ulysses. It was the opinion of the antients, that the shades of the deceased could visit the earth before the obsequies were finished, but not afterwards; this is evident from the words of Patroclus, Iliad xxiii.

——————— To the further shore,
When once we pass, the soul returns no more.

It is therefore out of favour to Ulysses that Mercury introduces these shades into the region where Agamemnon resided, before the funeral ceremonies, that they might not return to earth and disquiet Ulysses. But there may be a stronger objection made against the former part of this book; namely, that this is an episode which has no relation to the principal subject, and that we may retrench it without destroying any part of the action essential to the Odyssey: but it may be answered, that though it makes no part of the principal action, yet it has a sufficient connection with it: it is the sequel of the death of the suitors, and consequently the principal action is the cause of it; it is drawn and deduced from it, and Homer makes a very happy use of it to adorn and diversify his poem, with the history of what happened before Troy, after the conclusion of the Iliad; and in particular, with the death of Achilles, and a description of his funeral ceremonies. Didymus, Dacier.

Plato in the beginning of his third dialogue, de Repub. brings an heavy charge against Homer, for the disadvantageous character he gives of a future state. He quotes the similitude of the bats, and affirms that the dreadful description of the condition of the dead, must deter mankind from hazarding their lives, even in the cause of their country. "Let us then (says that author) with the "permission of Homer and other poets, reject such relations, not "because they are unpoetical, not because they are unpleasant to "read, but because by how much they are more pleasant and

Trembling the ſpectres glide, and plaintive vent
Thin, hollow ſcreams, along the deep deſcent.
As in the cavern of ſome rifted den,
Where flock nocturnal bats, and birds obſcene;
Cluſter'd they hang, 'till at ſome ſudden ſhock,
They move, and murmurs run thro' all the rock:
So cow'ring fled the ſable heaps of ghoſts,
And ſuch a ſcream fill'd all the diſmal coaſts.
And now they reach'd the Earth's remoteſt ends,
And now the gates where ev'ning Sol deſcends,
And Leucas' rock, and Ocean's utmoſt ſtreams,
And now pervade the duſky land of Dreams,

" poetical, by ſo much they are more dangerous, and to be kept " from our youth, and men, who are born to aſſert their liberty " with the hazard of their lives, and prefer death to ſlavery." It muſt be allowed that this is ſtrong reaſoning, and it is not eaſy to guard the doctrine of Homer from ſuch unhappy conſequences; for why ſhould men chuſe to die, rather than be ſlaves, when by death they fall into a worſe condition? It will not be an anſwer to ſay that Homer aſſerts a threefold ſtate in futurity, viz. of the ſoul, the εἴδωλον, or "vehicle," and the body: and that while the "vehicle" is in this condition of horrours, the ſoul may be happy; for ſtill the ſtate of the dead is repreſented as a ſtate of horrour, and man is in part (namely, in his εἴδωλον) miſerable after death: nay, ſo miſerable that even Hercules, who was a god, and received amongſt the deities, is yet tormented in hell; lib. xi.

Here hov'ring ghoſts, like fowl, his ſhade ſurround,
And clang their pinions with terrific ſound,
Gloomy as night he ſtands, in act to throw
Th' aerial arrow from the twanging bow.

It will indeed be a vindication of Homer as a poet, to ſay that he wrote according to the opinion of his age; and that ſuch as was the notion of the ancients of a future ſtate, ſuch is his deſcription of it. I will only add, that we may collect from Plato, that he judged this book genuine, for he quotes this paſſage as Homer's.

v. 17. *And Leucas' rock*————] This deſcription of the deſcent into hell is more particular than that in the eleventh Odyſſey; and each particular is well ſuited to the ſubject; the deſcent is fabled to be by the ocean, becauſe the ſun ſeems to deſcend through it into night or the region of darkneſs, in the weſtern parts of

And reſt at laſt, where ſouls unbodied dwell
In ever-flow'ring meads of Aſphodel.
The empty forms of men inhabit there,
Impaſſive ſemblance, images of air!
Nought elſe are all that ſhin'd on earth before;
Ajax, and great Achilles are no more!

heaven. Milton fables the ſun to riſe through the gates of light, after the manner of the antients.

——————'Till morn,
Wak'd by the circling hours, with roſy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light ————

The circumſtance likewiſe of going through the region of Dreams is well choſen; dreams are the attendants of ſleep, the brother of death; they come by night, and are therefore well imagined to have relation to the kingdom of death, and to be introductory to it: Virgil, in the deſcent of Æneas into hell, has borrowed this image,

" ———— Quam ſedem ſomnia vulgo
" Vana tenere ferunt" ————

The god of ſleep there hides his heavy head,
And empty dreams on every leaf are ſpread.

The only circumſtance liable to objection is, the Leucadian, or white rock, which Ariſtarchus thought improperly placed in the road to the realms of darkneſs; but (replies Euſtathius) this is only meant of a rock ſtanding on the extremities of the earth, or a rock on which the laſt rays of the ſun fall. Dacier imagines, that there is a further meaning in the expreſſion: " There is an iſland " overagainſt Arcarnania, on the weſt of Ithaca, called Leucas, " from a white rock ſtanding in it; this rock was famous in an- " tiquity, becauſe lovers in deſpair threw themſelves from the " top of it into the ocean; it was called the Lover's Leap, and " being thus remarkable for the deaths of numbers of people, " Homer places it here." This is no ill explication; for a rock may well be feigned to ſtand at the entrance of the region of death, by which ſo many perſons had entered into it.

Ovid, in his Epiſtles, mentions this Leucadian rock.

———— O you that love in vain,
Fly hence, and ſeek the fair Leucadian main:
There ſtands a rock from whoſe impending ſteep,
Apollo's fane ſurveys the rolling deep;
There injur'd lovers, leaping from above,
Their flames extinguiſh, and forget to love.

Yet ſtill a maſter-ghoſt, the reſt he aw'd,
The reſt ador'd him, tow'ring as he trod;
Still at his ſide is Neſtor's ſon ſurvey'd,
And lov'd Patroclus ſtill attends his ſhade.
New as they were to that infernal ſhore,
The ſuitors ſtopp'd, and gaz'd the hero o'er,
When, moving ſlow, the regal form they view'd
Of great Atrides: him in pomp purſu'd
And ſolemn ſadneſs thro' the gloom of hell,
The train of thoſe who by Ægyſthus fell.
O mighty chief! (Pelides thus began)
Honour'd by Jove above the lot of man!

v. 35. *O mighty chief! (Pelides thus began)* &c.] This appears to be introduced ſomewhat unnaturally: Achilles had now been dead about ten years, and Agamemnon almoſt as long; it can therefore ſcarce be reconciled to probability, to imagine that they ſhould not have met before this time, and mutually have ſatisfied their curioſities, by relating their ſeveral ſtories at ſome former interview: Dacier indeed remarks, that we are not to imagine this conference was held at the time when the ſuitors deſcended, but upon ſome preceding occaſion, immediately after the death of Agamemnon. If this be allowed, yet the objection remains, that the introduction is forced and unnatural, for then the deſcent of Mercury and the ſhades of the ſuitors will be no reaſon why this conference ſhould be here repeated: for ſo, neither Mercury nor the ſuitors heard it. But Dacier is undoubtedly in an errour; for ἔδυπον in the original is the third perſon plural, and abſolutely refers to Mercury and the ſhades of the ſuitors; and therefore it follows that this conference happened at the time of their entrance.

The ſhades of the ſuitors (obſerves Dacier) when they are ſummoned by Mercury out of the palace of Ulyſſes, emit a feeble, plaintive, inarticulate ſound, τρίζουσι, "ſtrident:" whereas Agamemnon, and the ſhades that have long been in the ſtate of the dead, ſpeak articulately. I doubt not but Homer intended to ſhew by the former deſcription, that when the ſoul is ſeparated from the organs of the body, it ceaſes to act after the ſame manner, as while it was joined to it; but how the dead recover their voices afterwards is not eaſy to underſtand. In other reſpects Virgil paints after Homer.

"——— pars tollere vocem
"Exiguam: inceptus clamor fruſtratur hiantes."

King of a hundred kings! to whom reſign'd
The ſtrongeſt, braveſt, greateſt of mankind.
Com'ſt thou the firſt, to view this dreary ſtate?
And was the nobleſt the firſt mark of fate?
Condemn'd to pay the great arrear ſo ſoon,
The lot, which all lament, and none can ſhun;
Oh! better hadſt thou ſunk in Trojan ground,
With all thy full-blown honours cover'd round!
Then grateful Greece with ſtreaming eyes might raiſe
Hiſtoric marbles to record thy praiſe:
Thy praiſe eternal on the faithful ſtone
Had with tranſmiſſive glories grac'd thy ſon,
But heavier fates were deſtin'd to attend:
What man is happy, 'till he knows his end?

O ſon of Peleus! greater than mankind!
(Thus Agamemnon's kingly ſhade rejoin'd)
Thrice happy thou! to preſs the martial plain
Midſt heaps of heroes in thy quarrel ſlain:
In clouds of ſmoke, rais'd by the noble fray,
Great and terrific ev'n in death you lay,
And deluges of blood flow'd round you ev'ry way.

They rais'd a feeble cry, with trembling notes,
But the weak voice deceiv'd their gaſping throats. Dryden.

But why ſhould we ſuppoſe with Dacier, that theſe ſhades of the ſuitors have loſt the faculty of ſpeaking; I rather imagine, that the ſounds they uttered were ſigns of complaint and diſcontent, and proceeded not from an inability to ſpeak: after Patroclus was ſlain, he appears to Achilles, and ſpeaks very articulately to him; yet to expreſs his ſorrow at his departure he acts like the ſuitors: for Achilles

Like a thin ſmoke beholds the ſpirit fly,
And hears a feeble, lamentable cry.

Dacier conjectures, that the power of ſpeech ceaſes in the dead, till they are admitted into a ſtate of reſt; but Patroclus is an inſtance to the contrary in the Iliad, and Elpenor in the Odyſſey, for they both ſpeak before their funeral rites are performed, and conſequently before they enter into a ſtate of repoſe amongſt the ſhades of the happy.

v. 56. *Great and terrific ev'n in death———*] There is a very peculiar beauty in the verſification of Homer in this place;

Nor ceas'd the ſtriſe, 'till Jove himſelf oppos'd,
And all in tempeſts the dire ev'ning clos'd.
Then to the fleet we bore thy honour'd load,
And decent on the funeral bed beſtow'd.
Then unguents ſweet and tepid ſtreams we ſhed;
Tears flow'd from ev'ry eye, and o'er the dead
Each clipt the curling honours of his head.
Struck at the news, thy azure mother came;
The ſea-green ſiſters waited on the dame:
A voice of loud lament thro' all the main
Was heard, and terrour ſeiz'd the Grecian train:

——σὺ δὲ ϛροφάλιϛγι κονίης
Κεῖσο μέγας μεγαλωϛὶ.

The words μέγας μεγαλωϛὶ ſet the largeneſs of the body of Achilles ſtretched out upon the ground full before our eyes: we ſee him in the deſcription; the repetition forces it upon our obſervation, ſo that the mind has time to dwell upon it, and admire the extent of the limbs of that hero.

v. 68. ——*terrour ſeiz'd the Grecian train.*] This deſcription furniſhed Ariſtarchus with another objection to this book: he thought it improbable that the appearance of Thetis and her ſea-nymphs ſhould terrify the whole Grecian army; they ſay in anſwer, that the whole ocean was in a great commotion as Thetis aſcended, or as Homer expreſſes it,

—— βοὴ δ' ἐπὶ πόντον ὀρώρει
Θεσπεσίη. ——

This uproar occaſioned their fear; the Greeks were ignorant of the cauſe of it, and conſequently apprehended ſome dreadful event; this is evident, for Neſtor appeaſes their conſternation by unfolding the reaſon of the tumult, and ſhewing them that it was occaſioned by the aſcent of Thetis.

The reader has undoubtedly obſerved how excellently Homer ſuſtains his characters; Neſtor is the wiſeſt man, both in the Iliad and Odyſſey: he has the experience of a very great age, and may therefore be ſuppoſed to be acquainted with all the moſt uncommon appearances in nature: the poet accordingly deſcribes him as the only perſon not afraid in the Grecian army; there were others undoubtedly as brave as Neſtor, but not one ſo wiſe; his intrepidity is therefore to be imputed to his wiſdom, not bravery; and this furniſhes us with an excellent moral; That ignorance is uſually the ſource of fear.

Back to their ſhips the frighted hoſt had fled;
But Neſtor ſpoke, they liſten'd, and obey'd.
(From old experience Neſtor's counſel ſprings,
And long viciſſitudes of human things.)
" Forbear your flight: fair Thetis from the main
" To mourn Achilles leads her azure train."
Around thee ſtand the daughters of the deep,
Robe thee in heav'nly veſts, and round thee weep,
Round thee, the muſes, with alternate ſtrain,
In ever-conſecrating verſe, complain.
Each warlike Greek the moving muſic hears,
And iron-hearted heroes melt in tears.

The character of Achilles is no leſs happily ſupported; the ſame love of glory is viſible in all he ſpeaks, that diſtinguiſhed his character through the Iliad: he ſtill prefers a ſhort life with fame, before old age without it,

Ὡς ὄφελες τιμῆς ἀπονήμενος ἧς περ ἄνασσες,
Δήμῳ ἐνὶ Τρώων θάνατον καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν.

The ſentiment is truly heroic; diſhonour is worſe than death, the happineſs or miſery of which is not to be meaſured by time, but glory: long life is but lengthened mortality, and they who live the longeſt have but the ſmall privilege of creeping more leiſurely than others to their graves.

v. 77. *Round thee, the muſes* ————] It is impoſſible (obſerves Dacier) not to be ſtruck with the noble fictions of Homer in honour of Achilles; every circumſtance is great. A whole army is in tears; the muſes celebrate his glory; a goddeſs and her nymphs ennoble it with their preſence and lamentations. At the funerals of other heroes, women and captives are the mourners; here the muſes perſonally appear. Heaven and earth, men and gods intereſt themſelves in the obſequies of ſo great an hero! Yet from this place Ariſtarchus draws an argument for rejecting this book: Homer (ſays he) no where elſe gives the number of the nine muſes, inſinuating that their number was not fixed in his age; but Homer frequently invokes the muſes, why then ſhould he be ignorant of the number? and if not ignorant of it, why might he not mention it? Ariſtarchus further adds, that it is abſurd to imagine the body of Achilles could be preſerved ſeventeen days without burial; but this may be aſcribed to the power of Thetis, who may eaſily be ſuppoſed to preſerve it. Beſides, why may not the body be embalmed? and then there will be no occaſion for a miracle, and the interpoſition of a goddeſs: we muſt remember what ſhe did to the body of Patroclus in the Iliad.

'Till ſev'nteen nights and ſev'nteen days return'd,
All that was mortal or immortal mourn'd.
To flames we gave thee the ſucceeding day,
And fatted ſheep and ſable oxen ſlay;
With oils and honey blaze th' augmented fires,
And like a god adorn'd, thy earthly part expires.
Unnumber'd warriours round the burning pile
Urge the fleet courſer's or the racer's toil;
Thick clouds of duſt o'er all the circle riſe,
And the mix'd clamour thunders in the ſkies.
Soon as abſorpt in all-embracing flame
Sunk what was mortal of thy mighty name,
We then collect thy ſnowy bones, and place
With wines and unguents in a golden vaſe,
(The vaſe to Thetis Bacchus gave of old,
And Vulcan's art enrich'd the ſculptur'd gold)
There we thy relics, great Achilles! blend
With dear Patroclus, thy departed friend:

v. 97. *There we thy relics, great Achilles! blend*
With dear Patroclus, thy departed friend.]

This is agreeable to the requeſt made to Achilles by the ghoſt of Patroclus, in the Iliad.

> Hear then! and as in fate and love we join,
> Ah ſuffer that my bones may reſt with thine!
> That golden urn thy goddeſs mother gave,
> May mix our aſhes in one common grave!

It is likewiſe aſſerted by Homer, that the bones of Antilochus were repoſited in the ſame urn with thoſe of Patroclus and Achilles; where then is the peculiar honour paid to Patroclus, if Antilochus was partaker of it? The difference is, the bones of Achilles and Patroclus were mixed in the urn, thoſe of Antilochus lay ſeparately.

Homer adds that the whole army raiſed a monument to Achilles; this is done according to his own injunctions in the Iliad, for ſpeaking of the tomb of Patroclus, he thus proceeds;

> Meantime erect the tomb with pious hands,
> A common ſtructure on the humble ſands;
> Hereafter Greece, ſome nobler work may raiſe,
> And late poſterity record our praiſe.

In the ſame urn a ſep'rate ſpace contains
Thy next belov'd, Antilochus' remains.
Now all the ſons of warlike Greece ſurround
Thy deſtin'd tomb, and caſt a mighty mound:
High on the ſhore the growing hill we raiſe,
That wide th' extended Helleſpont ſurveys;
Where all, from age to age who paſs the coaſt,
May point Achilles' tomb, and hail the mighty ghoſt.
Thetis herſelf to all our peers proclaims
Heroic prizes and exequial games;
The gods aſſented; and around thee lay
Rich ſpoils and gifts that blaz'd againſt the day.
Oft' have I ſeen with ſolemn funeral games
Heroes and kings committed to the flames;
But ſtrength of youth, or valour of the brave
With nobler conteſt ne'er renown'd a grave.
Such were the games by azure Thetis giv'n,
And ſuch thy honours, oh belov'd of heav'n!
Dear to mankind thy fame ſurvives, nor fades
Its bloom eternal in the Stygian ſhades.
But what to me avail my honours gone,
Succeſsful toils, and battles bravely won;
Doom'd by ſtern Jove, at home to end my life,
By curſt Ægyſthus, and a faithleſs wife!
Thus they; while Hermes o'er the dreary plain
Led the ſad numbers by Ulyſſes ſlain,
On each majeſtic form they caſt a view,
And tim'rous paſs'd and awfully withdrew.
But Agammemnon, thro' the gloomy ſhade,
His antient hoſt Amphimedon ſurvey'd;

Achilles means, that when he is dead the Greeks ſhould raiſe one common monument to himſelf and Patroclus, which we ſee here effected.

v. 127. *But Agamemnon thro' the gloomy ſhade,*
His antient hoſt Amphimedon ſurvey'd.]

An objection has been raiſed againſt this paſſage, and it has been thought an abſurdity that Agamemnon ſhould be the gueſt of Am-

Son of Melanthius! (he began) O ſay!
What cauſe compell'd ſo many, and ſo gay,
To tread the downward, melancholy way?
Say, could one city yield a troop ſo fair?
Were all theſe partners of one native air?
Or did the rage of ſtormy Neptune ſweep
Your lives at once, and whelm beneath the deep?
Did nightly thieves, or pirates cruel bands,
Drench with your b'ood your pillag'd country's ſands?
Or well-defending ſome beleaguer'd wall,
Say, for the publick did ye greatly fall?
Inform thy gueſt; for ſuch I was of yore
When our triumphant navies touch'd your ſhore;
Forc'd a long month the wint'ry ſeas to bear,
To move the great Ulyſſes to the war.

phimedon, and not of Ulyſſes, when he came to make an addreſs to him, and was within his teritories. Didymus anſwers, that this conduct in Agamemnon was occaſioned by the refuſal of Ulyſſes to aſſiſt in the war of Troy: Agamemnon reſented his denial, and went to the houſe of Amphimedon.

v. 142. *Forc'd a long month* ——— ——
To move the great Ulyſſes to the war.]

It is not obvious why Ulyſſes, who was a perſon of the greateſt bravery, ſhould be unwilling to engage in ſuch an action of glory, as the war of Troy: was it becauſe he foreſaw that it would be a work of danger, (as Euſtathius imagines) or was he diſſatisfied in the ground of it, which was only to revenge the rape of Helen, and nothing but a private injury? The former is a reaſon unworthy of his heroic character, the latter is no more than a conjecture. It may poſſibly be a truer reaſon that he was unwilling to forſake his wife, of whom he was very fond, and whom he newly had married: but then it muſt be allowed, that he prefers his love to his glory. Euſtathius recites the manner how he was drawn to engage in the war of Troy: Ulyſſes, to deliver himſelf from the importunities of his friends to aſſiſt Agamemnon, pretended madneſs, and yoked two animals of a different kind to a plough, and began to work with them; Palamedes, who ſuſpected the impoſture, took his ſon Telemachus, an infant, and laid him in the furrow before the plough; Ulyſſes turned aſide not to hurt his child, and this diſcovered the impoſition. Ariſtotle takes notice of the great judgment of Homer in ſuppreſſing this incident concerning Ulyſſes, it being unworthy of the bravery of an hero: he is proving, chap. viii.

O king of men! I faithful ſhall relate
(Reply'd Amphimedon) our hapleſs fate.
Ulyſſes abſent, our ambitious aim
With rival loves purſu'd his royal dame:
Her coy reſerve, and prudence mix'd with pride,
Our common ſuit nor granted, nor deny'd;
But cloſe with inward hate our deaths deſign'd;
Vers'd in all arts of wily womankind.
Her hand, laborious, in deluſion, ſpread
A ſpacious loom, and mix'd the various thread;
Ye peers (ſhe cry'd) who preſs to gain my heart
Where dead Ulyſſes claims no more a part,
Yet a ſhort ſpace, your rival-ſuit ſuſpend,
'Till this funereal web my labours end:
Ceaſe, 'till to good Laertes I bequeath
A taſk of grief, his ornaments of death:
Leſt, when the fates his royal aſhes claim,
The Grecian matrons taint my ſpotleſs fame;
Should he, long honour'd with ſupreme command,
Want the laſt duties of a daughter's hand.
The fiction pleas'd: our genrous train complies,
Nor fraud miſtruſts in virtue's fair diſguiſe.
The work ſhe ply'd; but ſtudious of delay,
Each following night revers'd the toils of day.

of his Poetics, that all the actions of an hero's life are not to be inſerted in an epic poem, for the actions of the ſame man are ſo many and different, that we can never reduce them to unity: for this reaſon Homer mentions not all the adventures of Ulyſſes, but only ſuch as have relation to the ſubject of the Odyſſey; he knew that this counterfeit madneſs had no connection either in truth or probability with the ſubject of his poem, and therefore he forbears the mention of it. The reader will underſtand the meaning of Ariſtotle, if he conſiders that the ſubject of the Odyſſey is the ſtory of a perſon who ſuffers great calamities in the return to his country, before he eſtabliſhes himſelf in his dominions: now the counterfeited madneſs of Ulyſſes has no connection with the ſufferings, and conſequently is judiciouſly omitted by Homer as foreign to the deſign of the poem, and contrary to the unity of the action. A detail of all the adventures of an hero's life is the province of hiſtory; the relation of one ſingle, great, and ſurpriſing action, is the ſubject of epic poetry.

Unheard, unſeen, three years her arts prevail;
The fourth, her maid reveal'd th' amazing tale,
And ſhow'd, as unperceiv'd we took our ſtand,
The backward labours of her faithleſs hand,
Forc'd, ſhe compleats it; and before us lay
The mingled web, whoſe gold and ſilver ray
Diſplay'd the radiance of the night and day.
Juſt as ſhe finiſh'd her illuſtrious toil,
Ill fortune led Ulyſſes to our iſle,
Far in a lonely nook, beſide the ſea,
At an old ſwineherd's rural lodge he lay:
Thither his ſon from ſandy Pyle repairs,
And ſpeedy lands, and ſecretly confers.
They plan our future ruin, and reſort
Confed'rate to the city and the court.
Firſt came the ſon; the father next ſucceeds,
Clad like a beggar, whom Eumæus leads;
Propt on a ſtaff, deform'd with age and care,
And hung with rags, that flutter'd in the air.
Who could Ulyſſes in that form behold?
Scorn'd by the young, forgotten by the old,
Ill us'd by all! to ev'ry wrong reſign'd,
Patient he ſuffer'd with a conſtant mind.
But when, ariſing in his wrath t' obey
The will of Jove, he gave the vengeance way;
The ſcatter'd arms that hung around the dome
Careful he treaſur'd in a private room:
Then, to her ſuitors bade his queen propoſe
The archer's ſtrife: the ſource of future woes,

v. 195. *Then, to her ſuitors bade his queen propoſe*, &c.] We have already ſeen, that it was the contrivance of Penelope to propoſe the bow, to gain time to defer the marriage hour; how then comes Amphimedon to aſcribe it to the art of Ulyſſes! Euſtathius anſwers that Amphimedon is in an errour, and that though the contrivance was from Penelope, yet Amphimedon could not come to the knowledge of it; and ſuch ſtratagems being agreeable to the character of Ulyſſes, he imputes this action to him rather than Penelope.

And omen of our death! In vain we drew
The twanging ſtring, and try'd the ſtubborn yew:
To none it yields but great Ulyſſes' hands;
In vain we threat; Telemachus commands:

It is impoſſible not to take notice that Homer makes repetition after repetition: Agamemnon ſpeaks the ſame words as in the eleventh Odyſſey: Amphimedon the ſame as in the ſecond; and the whole account of the ſuitors deſtruction is no more than a recital of what the reader already knows. Was Homer tired at the end of his work, and would not give himſelf the labour of invention? I confeſs we may loſe our appetite to ſee the ſame entertainment thus continually ſerved up in the very ſame manner, without ſo much as a new garniſhment. I fear the words of Ulyſſes may ſometimes be applicable to Homer.

And what ſo tedious as a twice-told tale?

Beſides, this whole infernal interview is merely ornamental, which the poet was at liberty to inſert or omit according to his judgment, without breaking the thread of the principal action; it might therefore be wiſhed that he had ſubſtituted ſome other incident in the room of it, and given a greater diverſity to the ſtory. If by laying the ſcene in hell, he deſigned to raiſe the wonder and curioſity of the reader (who cannot fail of having his attention awakened to ſee a proſpect opened beyond the bounds of nature, and to look into the ſtate of departed heroes) yet it muſt be confeſſed that this deſign has already been fully executed in the eleventh of the Odyſſey. But the poet ſeems to introduce the deſcent for the information of the dead rather than the living; Agamemnon is told how the ſuitors were deſtroyed by Ulyſſes; and Achilles how nobly the Greeks performed his funeral obſequies; incidents that very little contribute to the ſtory of the Odyſſey. In ſhort, the main action ſtands ſtill during this whole epiſode, which takes up almoſt half the book, and the latter part of the epiſode preſents no new object to amuſe and entertain us. But,

——— —— "Cynthius aurem
"Vellit"———

I betray my own want of judgment, rather than diſcover Homer's errours. I will only add, that the reader will be fully convinced that this whole epiſode may be omitted, by obſerving how well the ſtory will be carried on with a regular connection by beginning the book with theſe words,

Οἱ δ' ἐπεὶ ἐκ πόλιος καλέσαν, τάχα δ' ἀγρὸν ἵκοντο. &c.

So that if I could in any part ſubſcribe to the opinion of Ariſtarchus for the rejection of this book, it ſhould be only for the former part of it, but I am perſuaded from the nobleneſs of the verſes, that the whole is genuine.

The bow he ſnatch'd, and in an inſtant bent;
Thro' ev'ry ring the victor arrow went.
Fierce on the threſhold then in arms he ſtood;
Pour'd forth the darts, that thirſted for our blood,
And frown'd before us, dreadful as a god!
Firſt bleeds Antinous: thick the ſhafts reſound;
And heaps on heaps the wretches ſtrow the ground;
This way, and that, we turn, we fly, we fall;
Some god aſſiſted, and unmann'd us all:
Ignoble cries precede the dying groans;
And batter'd brains and blood beſmear the ſtones.
Thus, great Atrides! thus Ulyſſes drove
The ſhades thou ſeeſt, from yon' fair realms above.
Our mangled bodies now deform'd with gore,
Cold and neglected, ſpread the marble floor.
No friend to bathe our wounds! or tears to ſhed
O'er the pale corſe! the honours of the dead.
Oh bleſt Ulyſſes (thus the king expreſt
His ſudden rapture) in thy conſort bleſt!
Not more thy wiſdom, than her virtue, ſhin'd;
Not more thy patience, than her conſtant mind.
Icarius' daughter, glory of the paſt,
And model to the future age, ſhall laſt:
The gods, to honour her fair fame, ſhall raiſe
(Their great reward) a poet in her praiſe.
Not ſuch, oh Tyndarus! thy daughter's deed,
By whoſe dire hand her king and huſband bled:
Her ſhall the muſe to infamy prolong,
Example dread! and theme of tragic ſong!
The gen'ral ſex ſhall ſuffer in her ſhame,
And ev'n the beſt that bears a woman's name.
Thus in the regions of eternal ſhade
Conferr'd the mournful phantoms of the dead.

v. 232. *Thus in the regions of eternal ſhade.*] I think it will not be improper here to particularize from whence antiquity raiſed the

While from the town, Ulyſſes, and his band,
Paſt to Laertes' cultivated land. 235

fictions concerning hell, and the nature of it, as we have it in Diodorus Siculus.

Pluto (obſerves that author) was the firſt that introduced the rites of ſepulture, and other ceremonies beſtowed on the dead: this is the reaſon why the antients imagined him to be the king of the dead.

Rhadamanthus is ſaid to have been the moſt juſt man in the world, he ſeverely puniſhed robbers and other notorious offenders, and from his ſingular reputation for integrity, was feigned to be the judge of the good and bad after death; and for the ſame reaſon Minos was joined with him in the ſame dignity.

Homer borrowed his fictions from Orpheus, Orpheus from the Ægyptians: it was Orpheus who introduced the opinion of the pains of the damned, and of the Elyſian fields, and taught that the ſouls of the dead were conducted by Mercury into the infernal manſions: (a proof that he was called ψυχοπομπὸς before the days of Homer.) Diodorus proceeds, and mentions in the beginning of this book, how Homer feigns that Mercury leads the ſhades of the dead by the ocean, the Leucadian rock, and the gates of the ſun: a plain inſtance that he looked upon this book as the genuine work of Homer. All theſe fables (continues Diodorus) are of Ægyptian extract; by the ocean, Homer means Nilus; by the gates of the ſun, he means Heliopolis, a city ſacred to the ſun; the meadow into which the ſhades are conducted, denotes the pleaſant meadows full of canes, adjoining to Memphis; and the dead are feigned to reſide there, becauſe it was the general burial-place amongſt the Ægyptians. Concerning Cocytus, Acheron, &c. the reader may conſult the firſt note upon the eleventh Odyſſey.

Plutarch, in his treatiſe of Iſis and Oſiris, agrees with Diodorus concerning the extraction of theſe fables from Ægypt, and mentions at Memphis the gates of lamentation and oblivion; that is, of Lethe, and Cocytus; which being opened at the burial of the dead, give a doleful and groaning ſound. From hence they are thus deſcribed by Homer in the tenth Odyſſey.

> And where flow rolling from the Stygian bed
> Cocytus' lamentable waters ſpread,
> Where the dark rock o'erhangs th' infernal lake,
> And mingling ſtreams eternal murmurs make.

Theſe obſervations give light to moſt of Homer's fictions concerning hell, and ſhew that his poetry is built upon the cuſtoms of antiquity.

Macrobius explains all theſe particulars after a different manner: this ſolution ſuppoſes a ſtate of pre-exiſtence of the ſoul: "If (ſays "that author) to die, be the ſame as to go to the infernal regions; "to enjoy the ſupernal, is then to live; and therefore before phi-

The ground himſelf had purchas'd with his pain,
And labour made the rugged ſoil a plain.
There ſtood his manſion of the rural ſort,
With uſeful buildings round the lowly court:
Where the few ſervants that divide his care,
Took their laborious reſt, and homely fare;
And one Sicilian matron, old and ſage,
With conſtant duty tends his drooping age.
Here now arriving, to his ruſtic band
And martial ſon, Ulyſſes gave command.

" loſophy prevailed, the body itſelf was ſuppoſed to be the infer-
" nal receptacle of the ſoul, into which ſhe deſcended as into a
" priſon, from above; this was thought the ſepulchre of the ſoul,
" and the cave of Pluto. The river of oblivion denotes the errour
" of the ſoul which forgets the majeſty of the former ſtate ſhe en-
" joyed before ſhe entered the body: Phlegethon, the ardour of
" our deſires, and flames of anger; Acheron, all our words and
" actions that bring us into ſorrows; ſo likewiſe, Styx implies
" our hatred, Cocytus our grief and lamentation. Thus alſo the
" puniſhments in hell are verified upon earth: the vulture which
" preys upon the liver of Tityus, is the ſting of a guilty con-
" ſcience: the ambitious man is the Siſyphus, who is eternally
" aſpiring, and yet always diſappointed; the avaritious man is the
" Tantalus, who ſtarves amidſt his plenty," &c

By joining theſe two interpretations together, we have at once the double pleaſure of a beautiful fable and inſtructive moral; from the whole we may collect, that although the antients were ignorant of the true nature of a future ſtate, yet that they believed it, and expected there would be puniſhments and rewards in it. This note is of uſe to explain ſeveral paſſages in the eleventh Odyſſey.

v. 236. *The ground himſelf had purchas'd with his pain.*] Euſtathius very well explains theſe words, in which the Greek may be conſtrued to ſignify that Laertes had purchaſed this place of retirement by his labour and induſtry: but probably Homer intends to expreſs an allotment or portion of ground which was aſſigned Laertes by the public, as a reward for his heroic labours in war, and bravery in conquering his enemies, like that mentioned in the Iliad.

The Lycians grant a choſen ſpace of ground,
With woods, with vineyards, and with harveſts crown'd.

It may either be ſo, or Homer intending ſolely to paint the laborious life of Laertes, added this circumſtance of his increaſing his rural cell by his induſtry, as an inſtance of it; though the latter is more ſuitable to the character of a king.

Enter the houſe, and of the briſtly ſwine
Select the largeſt to the pow'rs divine.
Alone, and unattended, let me try
If yet I ſhare the old man's memory:
If thoſe dim eyes can yet Ulyſſes know,
(Their light and deareſt object long ago)
Now chang'd with time, with abſence, and with woe?
Then to his train he gives his ſpear and ſhield;
The houſe they enter; and he ſeeks the field,
Thro' rows of ſhade with various fruitage crown'd,
And labour'd ſcenes of richeſt verdure round.
Nor aged Dolius, nor his ſons were there,
Nor ſervants, abſent on another care;
To ſearch the woods for ſets of flow'ry thorn,
Their orchard bounds to ſtrengthen and adorn.
But all alone the hoary king he found;
His habit coarſe, but warmly wrapt around;
His head, that bow'd with many a penſive care,
Fenc'd with a double cap of goatſkin hair:
His buſkins old, in former ſervice torn,
But well repair'd; and gloves againſt the thorn.

v. 266. ——————*gloves againſt the thorn.*] Caſaubon in his remarks upon Athenæus, lib. xii. cap. 2. affirms, that antiently neither the Greeks nor the Romans ever wore any covering on their hands, which are now uſed ſo univerſally, that they are worn by the meaneſt people; but this place is an inſtance of Caſaubon's miſtake: it is true, Xenophon gives this practice as an argument of the luxury and delicacy of the Perſians, who ſuffered no part of the body to be expoſed to the air, but wore καὶ περὶ ἀκραις ταῖς χερσὶ χειρίδας, καὶ δακτυλήθρας ἔχουσι. "gloves upon their hands, and coverings on their very fingers." Pliny the younger mentions the ſame cuſtom amongſt the Romans, "Manus "hieme manicis muniebantur! ut ne cœli quidem aſperitas ullum "ſtudiis tempus eriperet." This then is the difference; the Perſians wore theſe hand-coverings out of effeminacy and delicacy; whereas in Greece they were uſed only out of neceſſity, as a defence in rural labour, as appears from Laertes, they being never mentioned upon any other occaſion, either in the Iliad or Odyſſey. Dacier.

In this array the kingly gard'ner ſtood,
And clear'd a plant, encumber'd with its wood.

v. 267. *In this array the kingly gard'ner ſtood,*
And clear'd a plant, encumber'd with its wood.]

This is the firſt appearance of Laertes, he is the very picture of melancholy; his dreſs, his employ, and ſolitary life, all diſcover a fixed ſorrow and contempt of the world. It has been a diſpute whether we are to aſcribe this retreat of Laertes to a meanneſs of ſpirit, who forſakes his ſtation, and is unequal to adverſity; or to wiſdom, and a noble neglect of the pomp and ſplendour of the world, by which he prefers a little rural retreat to all the magnificence of a palace, and a ſmall garden to all the dominions of a king. Plutarch ſeverely cenſures his conduct: "A perſon (obſerves that writer) who waſtes his age in his bed, or in trivial affairs, makes himſelf an object of contempt, as Homer teaches by the examples of Neſtor and Laertes: Neſtor, by engaging in the war of Troy, obtained the utmoſt veneration; while Laertes, who abandoned himſelf to ſolitude, was deſpiſed univerſally." I am unwilling to ſubſcribe to this obſervation, being of opinion that the ſilent virtues of a good man in ſolitude are more amiable than all the noiſy honours of active life. The picture of Laertes is undoubtedly drawn very naturally: a tender father is afflicted for the loſs of a brave and beloved ſon; this bitter ingredient gives a diſreliſh to all the vanities of life; he is deprived of an object that he valued above the world, he therefore neglects it as having nothing worthy of his cares, and abandons it for privacy and tranquillity. Menedemus in Terence is the very copy of Laertes in Homer; an inſtance that he thought Homer's an exact repreſentation of human nature; and the applauſe with which that comedy was received, ſhews that all Rome was of the ſame judgment. Sorrow loves to be alone, rather ſeeks for amuſements than buſineſs and glory; and it may perhaps be true, that it ſhews more greatneſs of ſoul to reſign a kingdom than to conquer it. Pride, ambition, and guilty paſſions have raiſed many to the top of human glory; but it evidences that a perſon is not influenced by vicious ſentiments, who knows how to moderate his deſires, and is able to retire from the ſplendour of a crown into obſcurity. Tully mentions the manner of life in Laertes, without condemnation; the place is to be found in his Cato Major, where he ſpeaks of the innocent amuſements of old age, and illuſtrates his aſſertions by the example of Laertes. "Homerus Laertem lenientem deſiderium, "quod capiebat e filio, colentem agrum & ſtercorantem facit." But Tully miſtakes Homer, for Laertes is not found dunging his ground.

Perhaps inſtead of λιτρεύοντα, he read κοπρήσοντα, as it is uſed in the ſeventeenth Odyſſey.

—— Ὀδυσσῆϊ τέμενε μέγα κοπρήσοντες.

Beneath a neighb'ring tree, the chief divine
Gaz'd o'er his ſire, retracing ev'ry line,
The ruins of himſelf! now worn away
With age, yet ſtill majeſtic in decay!
Sudden his eyes releas'd their wat'ry ſtore;
The much enduring man could bear no more.
Doubtful he ſtood, if inſtant to embrace
His aged limbs, to kiſs his rev'rend face,
With eager tranſport to diſcloſe the whole,
And pour at once the torrent of his ſoul.—
Not ſo: his judgment takes the winding way
Of queſtion diſtant, and of ſoft eſſay;
More gentle methods on weak age employs;
And moves the ſorrows, to enhance the joys.

Or perhaps he quoted by memory. I will only add, that Tully in his retirement at Tuſculum, uſed to write to his friends, that he there led the life of Laertes: and Tully was too ſenſible of his own worth, to ſpeak any thing to the diſparagement of it.

v. 279. *Not ſo: his judgment takes the winding way.*] It has been objected, that Ulyſſes here acts contrary to filial piety, and permits a tender father to continue in his ſorrows, when it was in his power immediately to make him happy, by a diſcovery of his perſon; they likewiſe condemn the κερτόμια ἔπεα, which Homer puts in the mouth of Ulyſſes. It muſt be allowed, that thoſe words are frequently uſed by the poet in a bad ſenſe, and ſignify "heart-"wounding, or reproachful words;" but here they are not ſo to be underſtood; they only imply, "that Ulyſſes blamed Laertes out "of tenderneſs for taking no more care of his perſon:" this is not a reproach, but the language of fondneſs and affection: or perhaps the poet meant to expreſs that this enquiry raiſed images of ſorrow in the ſoul of Laertes, and "wounded his heart" by naming the loſt Ulyſſes. Euſtathius ſolves the former objection by ſaying that Ulyſſes delayed the diſcovery, leſt the ſuddenneſs of joy ſhould prove fatal to Laertes. But Homer undoubtedly paints according to nature; Ulyſſes burſts into tears at the ſight of his father, yet reſtrains them, and tries if after twenty years abſence he was known by him; this delay raiſes the reader's curioſity, makes him, as it were preſent at the interview, and impatient to hear the manner of the diſcovery: beſides, this procedure excellently agrees with the general character of Ulyſſes, who is upon all emergencies maſter of his paſſions, and remarkable for diſguiſe and an artful diſſimulation; this diſguiſe has a very happy effect in this place, it holds us in a pleaſing ſuſpence, and makes us wait with attention to ſee the iſſue of the interview.

Then, to his ſire with beating heart he moves;
And with a tender pleaſantry reproves:
Who digging round the plant ſtill hangs his head,
Nor aught remits the work, while thus he ſaid.
Great is thy ſkill, oh father! great thy toil,
Thy careful hand is ſtamp'd on all the ſoil,
Thy ſquadron'd vineyards well thy art declare,
The olive green, blue fig, and pendant pear;
And not one empty ſpot eſcapes thy care.
On ev'ry plant and tree thy cares are ſhown,
Nothing neglected, but thyſelf alone.
Forgive me, father, if this fault I blame;
Age ſo advanc'd may ſome indulgence claim.
Not for thy ſloth, I deem thy lord unkind;
Nor ſpeaks thy form a mean or ſervile mind:
I read a monarch in that princely air,
The ſame thy aſpect, if the ſame thy care;
Soft ſleep, fair garments, and the joys of wine,
Theſe are the rights of age, and ſhould be thine.
Who then thy maſter, ſay? and whoſe the land
So dreſs'd and manag'd by thy ſkilful hand?
But chief, oh tell me! (what I queſtion moſt)
Is this the far-fam'd Ithacenſian coaſt?
For ſo reported the firſt man I view'd,
(Some ſurly iſlander, of manners rude)

v. 298. *I read a monarch in that princely air.*] The words in the Greek are not without obſcurity, and Euſtathius explains them two ways; they may either ſignify, that Laertes appears to be a perſon of ſuch diſtinction that he ought to live with more delicacy and dignity, viz. "to bathe, and after a due repaſt to ſleep in "ſtate;" or they imply, that Laertes ſhews the dignity of a king in his perſon, who comes from the bath, and dines in ſtate. Ulyſſes cannot compare Laertes to a king who is freſh from the bath and dreſt royally, for he tells us, he is covered with ſweat and duſt; he therefore means that his perſonage is noble, and like a king, that therefore he ought to live like a king, with reſpect to his food and his bath, and to indulge his age by allowing it eaſe and refreſhment.

Nor farther conference vouchſaf'd to ſtay;
Heedleſs he whiſtl'd, and purſu'd his way.
But thou! whom years have taught to underſtand;
Humanely hear, and anſwer my demand:
A friend I ſeek, a wiſe one and a brave,
Say, lives he yet, or moulders in the grave?
Time was (my fortunes then were at the beſt)
When at my houſe I lodg'd this foreign gueſt;
He ſaid, from Ithaca's fair iſle he came,
And old Laertes was his father's name.
To him, whatever to a gueſt is ow'd
I paid, and hoſpitable gifts beſtow'd;
To him ſev'n talents of pure ore I told,
Twelve cloaks, twelve veſts, twelve tunics ſtiff with gold,
A bowl, that rich with poliſh'd ſilver flames,
And, ſkill'd in female works, four lovely dames.
At this the father, with a father's fears:
(His venerable eyes bedimm'd with tears.)
This is the land; but ah! thy gifts are loſt,
For godleſs men, and rude, poſſeſs the coaſt:
Sunk is the glory of this once fam'd ſhore!
Thy antient friend, oh ſtranger, is no more!
Full recompence thy bounty elſe had borne;
For ev'ry good man yields a juſt return:
So civil rights demand; and who begins
The track of friendſhip, not purſuing, ſins.
But tell me, ſtranger, be the truth confeſt,
What years have circled ſince thou ſaw'ſt that gueſt?
That hapleſs gueſt, alas! for ever gone!
Wretch that he was! and that I am! my ſon!
If ever man to miſery was born,
'Twas his to ſuffer, and 'tis mine to mourn!
Far from his friends, and from his native reign,
He lies a prey to monſters of the main,
Or ſavage beaſts his mangled reliques tear,
Or ſcreaming vultures ſcatter thro' the air:

Nor could his mother fun'ral unguents ſhed;
Nor wail'd his father o'er th' untimely dead;
Nor his ſad conſort, on the mournful bier,
Seal'd his cold eyes, or drop'd a tender tear!
But tell me, who thou art? and what thy race?
Thy town, thy parents, and thy native place?
Or if a merchant in purſuit of gain,
What port receiv'd thy veſſel from the main?
Or com'ſt thou ſingle, or attend thy train?
Then thus the ſon. From Alybas I came,
My palace there; Eperitus my name,
Not vulgar born; from Aphidas, the king
Of Polypemon's royal line, I ſpring.
Some adverſe dæmon from Sicania bore
Our wand'ring courſe, and drove us on your ſhore:
Far from the town, an unfrequented bay
Reliev'd our weary'd veſſel from the ſea.
Five years have circled ſince theſe eyes purſu'd
Ulyſſes parting thro' the ſable flood;
Proſp'rous he ſail'd, with dexter auguries,
And all the wing'd good omens of the ſkies.
Well hop'd we, then, to meet on this fair ſhore,
Whom heav'n, alas! decreed to meet no more.
Quick thro' the father's heart theſe accents ran;
Grief ſeiz'd at once, and wrapt up all the man;

v. 353. —— —— *From Alybas I came.*] Ulyſſes is inexhauſtible in his fictions; he here accommodates the names of perſons and places to his fortunes: Alybas is ſuppoſed to be a city of Italy, afterwards called Metapontium. It is placed by others in Thrace. It is here introduced to denote the wanderings of Ulyſſes by the ſea, or ἁλὴ: the word "aphidas" denotes his generoſity, which "ſpares nothing" towards his friends. He feigns himſelf to be the grandſon of Πολυπήμων, to repreſent the multitude of his ſufferings; his name is Eperitus, from ἐπήρις, the ſame with περιμαχητός, from ἐρίζω, to ſhew the ſtruggle that he has met with in all his adventures, as well as the toils in the war of Troy, and againſt other enemies. Euſtathius.

Deep from his ſoul he ſigh'd, and ſorrowing ſpread
A cloud of aſhes on his hoary head.
Trembling with agonies of ſtrong delight
Stood the great ſon, heart-wounded with the ſight:

v. 369. ——— ——— *and ſorrowing ſpread*
A cloud of aſhes on his hoary head.]

This was a common practice among the antient orientals, in token of the extremity of ſorrow; it was uſed among the Hebrews as well as Greeks; thus Ezek. xxvii. 30. "They ſhall caſt duſt "upon heir heads." Job. ii. 12. "They rent every one his "mantle, and ſprinkled duſt upon their heads." Thus alſo Achilles in the eighteenth of the Iliad;

His purple garments, and his golden hairs,
Thoſe he deforms in duſt, and theſe he tears.

Homer calls it κόνιν αἰθαλόεσσαν, which does not mean that Laertes threw glowing embers on his head, for he was in his garden where ſuch aſhes were not to be found, but he means ξήραν, or "dry duſt," ſuch as ariſes from ſubſtances conſumed by fire, or reſembling aſhes. Euſtathius.

v. 371. *Trembling with agonies*, &c.] The Greek expreſſion is remarkable,

——— ——— ἀνὰ ῥῖνας δὲ οἱ ἤδη
Δριμὺ μένος πρόκτυψε ——— ———

"a ſharp ſenſation ſtruck his noſtrils." Euſtathius judges, that the meaning is that Ulyſſes perceived himſelf ready to burſt into tears; a kind of a pricking ſharp ſenſation being felt in the noſtrils before the eruption of tears. Caſaubon more fully explains it; he obſerves that all violent paſſions cauſe a ſenſation in the noſtrils, ariſing from the ebullition of the ſpirits, which mount toward the brain; and endeavouring to free themſelves from reſtraint, find a vent by the noſtril, and crouding through it, dilate it in their paſſage; this is evident from animals, and the nobler kinds of them, as the bull, the horſe, the lion, whoſe noſtrils always dilate when moved to anger. A ſimilar expreſſion is found in the firſt Idyllium of Theocritus.

Καί οἱ ἀεὶ δριμεῖα χολὰ ποτὶ ῥινὶ κάθηται.

He ſpeaks of the anger of the god Pan, but it is applicable to all violence of paſſion. Ariſtotle (obſerves Dacier) quotes this verſe as applied by Homer to expreſs anger, cap. 8. of his morals to Nicomachus, but he is evidently in an errour; for there is here no mention of anger: he undoubtedly truſted to his memory, it being ſorrow ariſing from filial tenderneſs which moves Ulyſſes. Dacier.

He ran, he ſeiz'd him with a ſtrict embrace,
With thouſand kiſſes wander'd o'er his face,
I, I am he; oh father, riſe! behold
Thy ſon, with twenty winters now grown old;
Thy ſon, ſo long deſir'd, ſo long detain'd,
Reſtor'd, and breathing in his native land:
Theſe floods of ſorrow, oh my ſire, reſtrain!
The vengeance is complete; the ſuitor-train,
Stretch'd in our palace, by theſe hands lie ſlain.
Amaz'd, Laertes. "Give ſome certain ſign,
"(If ſuch thou art) to manifeſt thee mine."
Lo here the wound (he cries) receiv'd of yore
The ſcar indented by the tuſky boar,
When by thyſelf and by Anticlea ſent,
To old Autolychus's realms I went.
Yet by another ſign thy offspring know;
The ſev'ral trees you gave me long ago,
While, yet a child, theſe fields I lov'd to trace,
And trod thy footſteps with unequal pace;
To ev'ry plant in order as we came,
Well-pleas'd you told its nature, and its name,

v. 389. *The ſev'ral trees you gave me long ago,*
While yet a child —— ——]

The word in the original is παιδνὸς, which ſignifies "a very "young boy:" Homer uſes it to expreſs the age, when out of a childiſh ſimplicity Ulyſſes aſked his father to grant him ſuch trees. Such requeſts are very natural in children, and we ſee (ſays Dacier) the ſame practiſed every day; parents out of fondneſs indulge the requeſts of their children in ſuch little particularities, and a bird, an horſe, &c. continue the child's favourite for many years. It muſt be allowed, that no poet ever followed nature ſo faithfully as Homer. Virgil perhaps has reached his nobleſt elevations and ſublimities, but there is a greater variety of natural incidents, more exact pictures of human life in Homer than in all other poets. Some painters excel in the boldneſs of their figures, and know how to draw a hero or a god, but are leſs happy in lower ſubjects; but Homer draws univerſally, and is excellent upon all occaſions; he paints the largeſt figures, or the leaſt ſketches, equally natural, and with equal beauty.

Whate'er my childiſh fancy aſk'd, beſtow'd;
Twelve pear-trees bowing with their pendent load,
And ten, that red with bluſhing apples glow'd;
Full fifty purple figs; and many a row
Of various vines that then began to blow,
A future vintage! when the hours produce
Their latent buds, and Sol exalts the juice.
Smit with the ſigns which all his doubts explain,
His heart within him melts; his knees ſuſtain
Their feeble weight no more; his arms alone
Support him, round the lov'd Ulyſſes thrown;
He faints, he ſinks with mighty joys oppreſt:
Ulyſſes claſps him to his eager breaſt.
Soon as returning life regains its ſeat,
And his breath lengthens, and his pulſes beat;
Yes, I believe (he cries) almighty Jove!
Heav'n rules us yet, and gods there are above.
'Tis ſo—the ſuitors for their wrongs have paid—
But what ſhall guard us, if the town invade?
If, while the news thro' ev'ry city flies,
All Ithaca and Cephalenia riſe?
To this Ulyſſes. As the gods ſhall pleaſe
Be all the reſt; and ſet thy ſoul at eaſe.
Haſte to the cottage by this orchard ſide,
And take the banquet which our cares provide:
There wait thy faithful band of rural friends,
And there the young Telemachus attends.
Thus having ſaid, they trac'd the garden o'er,
And ſtooping enter'd at the lowly door.
The ſwains and young Telemachus they found,
The victim portion'd, and the goblet crown'd.
The hoary king, his old Sicilian maid
Perfum'd and waſh'd, and gorgeouſly array'd.
Pallas attending gives his frame to ſhine
With awful port, and majeſty divine;

His gazing ſon admires the god-like grace,
And air celeſtial dawning o'er his face.
What god, he cry'd, my father's form improves?
How high he treads, and how enlarg'd he moves?
Oh! would to all the deathleſs pow'rs on high,
Pallas and Jove, and him who gilds the ſky!
(Reply'd the king, elated, with his praiſe)
My ſtrength were ſtill, as once in better days:
When the bold Cephalens the leaguer form'd,
And proud Nericus trembled as I ſtorm'd.
Such were I now, not abſent from your deed
When the laſt ſun beheld the ſuitors bleed,
This arm had aided yours; this hand beſtrown
Our floors with death, and puſh'd the ſlaughter on;
Nor had the ſire been ſep'rate from the ſon.
They commun'd thus; while homeward bent their way
The ſwains, fatigu'd with labours of the day;
Dolius the firſt, the venerable man;
And next his ſons, a long ſucceeding train.
For due refection to the bow'r they came,
Call'd by the careful old Sicilian dame,

v. 438. *And proud Nericus trembled as I ſtorm'd.*] I doubt not but the reader has obſerved, that Laertes uſes the very tu n of language and manner of ſelf-commendation ſo remarkable in almoſt all the ſpeeches of Neſtor: this is to be aſcribed to the nature of old age in general, which loves a little to boaſt, and relates the exploits of youth with the utmoſt ſatisfaction; or as Horace deſcribes it,

" ——— Laudator temporis acti
" Se puero" ———

I will only add, that the reaſon why Homer deſcribes Laertes enlarged with ſtrength and majeſty by Minerva, is to reconcile the future ſtory to probability; Laertes acts the hero, engages at the head of his friends, and kills the leader of his enemies; this might appear to be an exploit too great for a weak old man waſted away with ſorrows; the poet therefore knowing that he had loſt his natural vigour through age, ſupplies the defect with preternatural ſtrength, and by this method renders him equal to his future action.

Who nurs'd the children, and now tends the ſire;
They ſee their lord, they gaze, and they admire.
On chairs and beds in order ſeated round,
They ſhare the gladſome board; the rooſs reſound.
While thus Ulyſſes to his antient friend:
"Forbear your wonder, and the feaſt attend;
"The rites have waited long." The chief commands
Their loves in vain; old Dolius ſpreads his hands,
Springs to his maſter with a warm embrace,
And faſtens kiſſes on his hands and face;
Then thus broke out. Oh long, oh daily mourn'd!
Beyond our hopes, and to our wiſh, return'd!
Conducted ſure by heav'n! for heav'n alone
Could work this wonder: welcome to thy own!
And joys and happineſs attend thy throne!
Who knows thy bleſt, thy wiſh'd return? oh ſay,
To the chaſte queen ſhall we the news convey?
Or hears ſhe, and with bleſſings loads the day?
Diſmiſs that care, for to the royal bride
Already is it known (the king reply'd,
And ſtraight reſum'd his ſeat) while round him bows
Each faithful youth, and breathes out ardent vows:
Then all beneath their father take their place,
Rank'd by their ages, and the banquet grace.
Now flying fame the ſwift report had ſpread
Thro' all the city, of the ſuitors dead.
In throngs they riſe, and to the palace crowd;
Their ſighs were many, and the tumult loud.
Weeping they bear the mangled heaps of ſlain,
Inhume the natives in their native plain,
The reſt in ſhips are wafted o'er the main.

v. 450. *Who nurs'd the children, and now tends the ſire*] We are not to imagine that this Sicilian was the wife of Dolius; Homer gives her the title of mother to his children, becauſe ſhe had the care of their education; for he adds, ἣ Σφέας τρέφε, ſhe was their nurſe, not their mother. Dacier.

v. 480 *The reſt in ſhips are wafted o'er the main.*] To underſtand this, we muſt remember that many of the ſuitors came from

Then ſad in council all the ſeniors ſate,
Frequent and full, aſſembled to debate.
Amid the circle firſt Eupithes roſe,
Big was his eye with tears, his heart with woes:
The bold Antinous was his age's pride,
The firſt who by Ulyſſes' arrow dy'd.
Down his wan cheek the trickling torrent ran
As mixing words with ſighs, he thus began.
Great deeds, oh friends! this wond'rous man has wrought,
And mighty bleſſings to his country brought.
With ſhips he parted and a num'rous train,
Thoſe, and their ſhips he bury'd in the main.
Now he returns, and firſt eſſays his hand
In the beſt blood of all his native land.
Haſte then, and ere to neighb'ring Pyle he flies,
Or ſacred Elis, to procure ſupplies;
Ariſe (or ye for ever fall) ariſe!
Shame to this age, and all that ſhall ſucceed!
If unreveng'd your ſons and brothers bleed.
Prove that we live, by vengeance on his head,
Or ſink at once forgotten with the dead.
Here ceas'd he, but indignant tears let fall
Spoke when he ceas'd: dumb ſorrow touch'd them all.
When from the palace to the wond'ring throng
Sage Medon came, and Phemius came along;
(Reſtleſs and early ſleep's ſoft bands they broke)
And Medon firſt th' aſſembled chiefs beſpoke.
Hear me, ye peers and elders of the land,
Who deem this act the work of mortal hand;

the neighbouring iſlands, Samos, Zacynthus, &c. and therefore they are ſaid to be tranſported by ſea, to be buried in their native countries: this cuſtom prevailed over all the oriental world: but there may be a particular reaſon why this is done by the Ithacans; they might intend to raiſe thoſe ſeveral iſlands to engage againſt Ulyſſes, and draw them to arms by ſuch moving ſpectacles. Dacier.

v. 508. *Hear me, ye peers and elders of the land.*] There is great art in the ſpeeches of Medon and Eupithes: Eupithes ſaid

As o'er the heaps of death Ulyſſes ſtrode,
Theſe eyes, theſe eyes beheld a preſent god,
Who now before him, now beſide him ſtood,
Fought as he fought, and mark'd his way with blood:
In vain old Mentor's form the god bely'd;
'Twas heav'n that ſtruck, and heav'n was on his ſide.
A ſudden horrour all th' aſſembly ſhook,
When ſlowly riſing, Halitherſes ſpoke:
(Rev'rend and wiſe, whoſe comprehenſive view
At once the preſent and the future knew)
Me too ye fathers hear! from you proceed
The ills ye mourn; your own the guilty deed.

that Ulyſſes had ſlain the braveſt of the Greeks: Medon allows it, but adds, that it was done by the will of the gods: the conſequence therefore is, that to fight againſt Ulyſſes upon this account, is to fight againſt the gods. Eupithes applies to their revenge, Medon to their fears; Eupithes ſheds tears to move their compaſſion, Medon intimidates them by averring that the aſſiſtance of the gods was viſible on the ſide of Ulyſſes. The perſons likewiſe whom Homer employs to plead againſt Eupithes are well choſen; Halitherſes is a prophet, Medon an herald, and both perſons eſteemed ſacred by their offices; this is the reaſon why the Greeks are ſaid to be ſtruck with awe at their appearance. Dacier, &c.

v. 517. ——————— *Halitherſes ſpoke.*] The ſpeech of Medon had a good effect upon the audience; for Homer adds that the whole aſſembly grew afraid; Halitherſes perceived it, and ſeconds it. He inſiſts upon a new head of perſuaſion, and ſets forth the juſtice of the late action of Ulyſſes: the ſuitors were ſlain (ſays he) for their crimes, and you are guilty for not reſtraining their outrages; and then to deter them from their preſent deſigns, he repreſents their danger in engaging againſt their king. From theſe ſpeeches (obſerves Euſtathius) Homer draws the probability of the future part of the ſtory; he divides the enemy, and wins over almoſt half their numbers; whereas, had they proceeded unanimouſly, Ulyſſes muſt neceſſarily have periſhed by their power.

It is obſerveable, that though Phemius accompanies Medon, yet he is ſilent; the reaſon is, he, as it were, ſpeaks by the mouth of Medon, he was witneſs to the aſſiſtance of heaven on the part of Ulyſſes, and approves and confirms by his preſence the truth of his teſtimony. It is thus on the ſtage where the whole chorus was antiently ſuppoſed to ſpeak by the mouth of their prolocutor. Dacier, &c.

Ye gave your ſons, your lawleſs ſons the rein,
(Oft' warn'd by Mentor and myſelf in vain)
An abſent hero's bed they ſought to ſoil,
An abſent hero's wealth they made their ſpoil:
Immod'rate riot, and intemp'rate luſt!
Th' offence was great, the puniſhment was juſt.
Weigh then my counſels in an equal ſcale,
Nor ruſh to ruin. Juſtice will prevail.
His mod'rate words ſome better minds perſuade:
They part, and join him; but the number ſtay'd.
They ſtorm, they ſhout, with haſty frenzy fir'd,
And ſecond all Eupithes' rage inſpir'd.
They caſe their limbs in braſs; to arms they run;
The broad effulgence blazes in the ſun.
Before the city, and in ample plain,
They meet: Eupithes heads the frantic train.
Fierce for his ſon, he breathes his threats in air;
Fate hears them not, and death attends him there.
This paſt on earth, while in the realms above
Minerva thus to cloud-compelling Jove.
May I preſume to ſearch thy ſecret ſoul!
Oh pow'r ſupreme, oh ruler of the whole!

v. 541. *Minerva thus to cloud-compelling Jove.*] Homer, to give importance, to the concluſive action of his poem, introduces Jupiter and Minerva in debate about the event of it. At the beginning of the Odyſſey he deſcribes the gods in conſultation for the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes: in the concluſion of it, we ſee Jupiter himſelf rewarding the virtue and bravery of Ulyſſes, and decreeing him to reign in peace and tranquillity. This is carried on with great Judgment: we are fully ſatisfied that the action of the Odyſſey is compleated in the happineſs of the hero, when we hear Jupiter giving his ſanction to it. Beſides, it leaves a noble image of the greatneſs of Ulyſſes, and of the whole ſtory of the Odyſſey, upon the reader's mind, when we ſee it is of ſuch weight as to engage Jupiter in its favour. Thus in imitation of Homer, toward the concluſion of the Æneid, Virgil deſcribes Jupiter and Juno in debate concerning the deciſive action between Turnus and Æneas.

Say, haſt thou doom'd to this divided ſtate
Or peaceful amity, or ſtern debate?
Declare thy purpoſe; for thy will is fate.
  Is not thy thought my own? (the god replies
Who rolls the thunder o'er the vaulted ſkies)
Hath not long ſince thy knowing ſoul decreed,
The chief's return ſhould make the guilty bleed?
'Tis done, and at thy will the fates ſucceed.
Yet hear the iſſue: ſince Ulyſſes' hand
Has ſlain the ſuitors, heav'n ſhall bleſs the land.
None now the kindred of th' unjuſt ſhall own;
Forgot the ſlaughter'd brother, and the ſon:
Each future day increaſe of wealth ſhall bring,
And o'er the paſt, oblivion ſtretch her wing.
Long ſhall Ulyſſes in his empire reſt,
His people bleſſing, by his people bleſt.
Let all be peace—He ſaid, and gave the nod
That binds the fates; the ſanction of the god:
And prompt to execute th' eternal will,
Deſcended Pallas from th' Olympian hill.
  Now ſat Ulyſſes at the rural feaſt,
The rage of hunger and of thirſt repreſt:
To watch the foe a truſty ſpy he ſent:
A ſon of Dolius on the meſſage went,

v. 552. ——————— *ſince Ulyſſes' hand*
Has ſlain the ſuitors, heav'n ſhall bleſs the land.]

The deſign of the Odyſſey is to ſhew virtue rewarded, and vice puniſhed; here to introduce this act of juſtice with the greater ſolemnity, Jupiter is repreſented giving his aſſent to it: "Let "there be peace (ſays that deity) but let juſtice be done, and the "guilty puniſhed;" the reader muſt neceſſarily be ſatisfied with the equity of the cauſe of Ulyſſes, when he hears Jupiter himſelf directing in it. Beſides, this conduct of Homer preſents us with an excellent moral; it ſhews us that the Deity is the governour of human affairs, and arbiter of peace and war; as he directs, the ſcenes of blood are opened or cloſed, and the words of Homer, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλὴ, may be applied to the Odyſſey as well as the Iliad.

Stood in the way, and at a glance beheld
The foe approach, embattl'd on the field.
With backward ſtep he haſtens to the bow'r,
And tells the news. They arm with all their pow'r,
Four friends alone Ulyſſes' cauſe embrace,
And ſix were all the ſons of Dolius' race:
Old Dolius too his ruſted arms put on;
And, ſtill more old, in arms Laertes ſhone.
Trembling with wrath, the hoary heroes ſtand,
And brazen panoply inveſts the band.
The opening gates at once their war diſplay:
Fierce they ruſh forth: Ulyſſes leads the way.
That moment joins them with celeſtial aid,
In Mentor's form, the Jove-deſcended maid:
The ſuff'ring hero felt his patient breaſt
Swell with new joy, and thus his ſon addreſt.
Behold, Telemachus! (nor fear the ſight)
The brave embattl'd; the grim front of fight!
The valiant with the valiant muſt contend:
Shame not the line whence glorious you deſcend,
Wide o'er the world their martial fame was ſpread;
Regard thyſelf, the living and the dead.

v. 572. *Four friends alone Ulyſſes' cauſe embrace.*] The poet tells us the exact number of the party of Ulyſſes, which conſiſted of ten perſons under the direction of Dolius, Laertes, and Ulyſſes: how many were under Eupites is uncertain, we therefore are at liberty to ſuppoſe them more or leſs ſuperiour in number; Medon and Halitherſes had withdrawn almoſt half of his aſſiſtants, and by that method reduced the enemy to a greater equality: it is probable that they had no very extraordinary inequality, for the onſet is ſo ſudden, that the friends of the dead ſuitors could not have time to embody; beſides, it appears from the ſixteenth Odyſſey, that of the whole band of ſuitors, twelve only were Ithacans, the reſt came from the adjacent iſlands, and therefore none of their friends could as yet be arrived to aſſiſt Eupithes, and conſequently this party conſiſted ſolely of Ithacans, and were not perhaps greatly ſuperiour to Ulyſſes. This obſervation likewiſe furniſhes us with a reaſon why the enemy was ſo eaſily defeated, by ſo ſmall a body of men as engaged for Ulyſſes.

Thy eyes, great father! on this battle caſt,
Shall learn from me Penelope was chaſte.
So ſpoke Telemachus! the gallant boy
Good old Laertes heard with panting joy;
And bleſt! thrice bleſt this happy day! he cries,
The day that ſhows me, ere I cloſe my eyes,
A ſon and grandſon of th' Arceſian name
Strive for fair virtue, and conteſt for fame!
Then thus Minerva in Laertes' ear:
Son of Arceſius, rev'rend warriour, hear!
Jove and Jove's daughter firſt implore in pray'r,
Then whirling high, diſcharge thy lance in air,
She ſaid, infuſing courage with the word.
Jove and Jove's daughter then the chief implor'd,
And whirling high, diſmiſt the lance in air,
Full at Eupithes drove the deathful ſpear:
The braſs-cheek'd helmet opens to the wound;
He falls, earth thunders, and his arms reſound.
Before the father and the conqu'ring ſon
Heaps ruſh on heaps; they fight, they drop, they run.
Now by the ſword and now the jav'lin fall
The rebel race, and death had ſwallow'd all;
But from on high the blue-ey'd virgin cry'd;
Her awful voice detain'd the headlong tide.
"Forbear, ye nations! your mad hands forbear
"From mutual ſlaughter: peace deſcends to ſpare."
Fear ſhook the nations: at the voice divine
They drop their jav'lins, and their rage reſign.
All ſcatter'd round their glitt'ring weapons lie;
Some fall to earth, and ſome confus'dly fly.

v. 605. *Full at Eupithes drove the deathful ſpear.*] Euſtathius calls this an admirable incident, or change of fortune in favour of Ulyſſes. The ſon of Eupithes is ſlain by the ſon of Laertes, and the father of Antinous by the father of Ulyſſes. We now ſee Ulyſſes happy in his wife, his ſon and his father; victorious over his enemies, and his ſubjects ſubmitting to his authority; and therefore the action is now compleat, and terminates with the Odyſſey.

With dreadful ſhouts Ulyſſes pour'd along,
Swift as an eagle, as an eagle ſtrong.
But Jove's red arm the burning thunder aims;
Before Minerva ſhot the livid flames;
Blazing they fell, and at her feet expir'd:
Then ſtopt the goddeſs, trembled, and retir'd.
Deſcended from the gods! Ulyſſes, ceaſe;
Offend not Jove: obey, and give the peace.
So Pallas ſpoke: the mandate from above
The king obey'd. The virgin-ſeed of Jove
In Mentor's form, confirm'd the full accord,
" And willing nations knew their lawful lord."

v. 629. ——— *The virgin-ſeed of Jove*
In Mentor's form confirm'd the full accord.]

The meaning of the paſſage is no more than this, when ſtript of its poetical ornaments: Mentor, a perſon of great wiſdom, acts as a mediator between the king and his ſubjects, he regulates the conditions of peace, and ratifies it with ſacrifices to the gods; this being an act of wiſdom, poetry aſcribes it to Minerva.

I muſt obſerve with what dignity Homer concludes the Odyſſey: to honour his hero, he introduces two deities, Jupiter and Pallas, who intereſt themſelves in his cauſe: he then paints Ulyſſes in the boldeſt colours, as he ruſhes upon the enemy with the utmoſt intrepidity, and his courage is ſo ungovernable, that Jupiter is forced to reſtrain it with his thunder. It is uſual for orators to reſerve the ſtrongeſt arguments for the concluſion, that they may leave them freſh upon the reader's memory; Homer uſes the ſame conduct, he repreſents his hero in all his terrour, he ſhews him to be irreſiſtible, and by this method leaves us fully poſſeſt with a noble idea of his magnanimity.

It has been already obſerved, that the end of the action of the Odyſſey is the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes in full peace and tranquillity; this is not effected, till the defeat of the ſuitors friends: and therefore if the poet had concluded before this event, the Odyſſey had been imperfect. It was neceſſary that the reader ſhould not only be informed of the return of Ulyſſes to his country and the puniſhment of the ſuitors, but of his re-eſtabliſhment by a peaceful poſſeſſion of his regal authority; which is not executed, till theſe laſt diſorders raiſed by Eupithes are ſettled by the victory of Ulyſſes, and therefore this is the natural concluſion of the action.

This book opens with the morning, and ends before night, ſo that the whole ſtory of the Odyſſey is comprehended in the com-

paſs of one and forty days. Monſieur Dacier upon Ariſtotle remarks, that an epic poem ought not to be too long: we ſhould be able to retain all the ſeveral parts of it at once in our memory: if we loſe the idea of the beginning when we come to the concluſion, it is an argument that it is of too large an extent, and its length deſtroys its beauty. What ſeems to favour this deciſion is, that the Æneid, Iliad, and Odyſſey are conformable to this rule of Ariſtotle, and every one of thoſe poems may be read in the compaſs of a ſingle day.

I have now gone through the collections upon the Odyſſey, and laid together what occurred moſt remarkable in this excellent poem. I am not ſo vain as to think theſe remarks free from faults, nor ſo diſingenuous as not to confeſs them: all writers have occaſion for indulgence, and thoſe moſt who leaſt acknowledge it. I have ſometimes uſed Madam Dacier as ſhe has done others, in tranſcribing ſome of her remarks without particulariſing them: but indeed it was through inadvertency only that her name is ſometimes omitted at the bottom of the note. If my performance has merit, either in theſe, or in my part of the tranſlation (namely in the ſixth, eleventh, and eighteenth books) it is but juſt to attribute it to the judgment and care of Mr. Pope, by whoſe hand every ſheet was corrected. His other, and much more able aſſiſtant, was Mr. Fenton, in the fourth and the twentieth books. It was our particular requeſt, that our ſeveral parts might not be made known to the world till the end of it: and if they have had the good fortune not to be diſtinguiſhed from his, we ought to be the leſs vain, ſince the reſemblance proceeds much leſs from our diligence and ſtudy to copy his manner, than from his own daily reviſal and correction. The moſt experienced painters will not wonder at this, who very well know, that no critic can pronounce even of the pieces of Raphael or Titian, which have, or which have not, been worked upon by thoſe of their ſchool; when the ſame maſter's hand has directed the execution of the whole, reduced it to one character and colouring, gone over the ſeveral parts, and given to each their finiſhing.

I muſt not conclude without declaring our mutual ſatisfaction in Mr. Pope's acceptance of our beſt endeavours, which have contributed at leaſt to his more ſpeedy execution of this great undertaking. If ever my name be numbered with the learned, I muſt aſcribe it to his friendſhip, in tranſmitting it to poſterity by a participation in his labours. May the ſenſe I have of this, and other inſtances of that friendſhip, be known as long as his name will cauſe mine to laſt; and may I to this end be permitted, at the concluſion of a work which is a kind of monument of his partiality to me, to place the following lines, as an inſcription memorial of it.

LET vulgar ſouls triumphal arches raiſe
Or ſpeaking marbles to record their praiſe;
And picture (to the voice of fame unknown)
The mimic feature on the breathing ſtone:
Mere mortals! ſubject to death's total ſway,
Reptiles of earth, and beings of a day!
'Tis thine, on ev'ry heart to grave thy praiſe,
A monument which worth alone can raiſe:
Sure to ſurvive, when time ſhall whelm in duſt
The arch, the marble, and the mimic buſt:
Nor 'till the volumes of th' expanded ſky
Blaze in one flame, ſhalt thou and Homer die:
Then ſink together, in the world's laſt fires,
What heav'n created, and what heav'n inſpires.
If aught on earth, when once this breath is fled,
With human tranſport touch the mighty dead:
Shakeſpear, rejoice! his hand thy page refines;
Now ev'ry ſcene with native brightneſs ſhines;
Juſt to thy fame, he gives thy genuine thought;
So Tully publiſh'd what Lucretius wrote;
Prun'd by his care, thy laurels loftier grow,
And bloom afreſh on thy immortal brow.
Thus when thy draughts, O Raphael! time invades,
And the bold figure from the canvas fades,
A rival hand recalls from every part
Some latent grace, and equals art with art;
Tranſported we ſurvey the dubious ſtrife,
While each fair image ſtarts again to life.
How long, untun'd, had Homer's ſacred lyre
Jarr'd grating diſcord, all extinct his fire?
This you beheld; and taught by heav'n to ſing,
Call'd the loud muſic from the ſounding ſtring;
Now wak'd from ſlumbers of three thouſand years,
Once more Achilles in dread pomp appears,

Tow'rs o'er the field of death; as fierce he turns,
Keen flaſh his arms, and all the hero burns;
With martial ſtalk, and more than mortal might,
He ſtrides along, and meets the gods in fight:
Then the pale Titans, chain'd on burning floors,
Start at the din that rends th' infernal ſhores;
Tremble the tow'rs of heav'n, earth rocks her coaſts,
And gloomy Pluto ſhakes with all his ghoſts.
To ev'ry theme reſponds thy various lay;
Here rolls a torrent, there meanders play;
Sonorous as the ſtorm thy numbers riſe,
Toſs the wild waves, and thunder in the ſkies;
Or ſofter than a yielding virgin's ſigh,
The gentle breezes breathe away and die.
Thus, like the radiant god who ſheds the day,
You paint the vale, or gild the azure way;
And while with ev'ry theme the verſe complies,
Sink without groveling, without raſhneſs riſe.
Proceed, great bard! awake th' harmonious ſtring,
Be ours all Homer! ſtill Ulyſſes ſing.
How long * that hero, by unſkilful hands,
Stript of his robes, a beggar trod our lands:
Such as he wander'd o'er his native coaſt,
Shrunk by the wand, and all the warriour loſt?
O'er his ſmooth ſkin a bark of wrinkles ſpread;
Old age diſgrac'd the honours of his head:
Nor longer in his heavy eye-ball ſhin'd
The glance divine, forth beaming from the mind.
But you, like Pallas, ev'ry limb infold
With royal robes, and bid him ſhine in gold;
Touch'd by your hand, his manly frame improves
With grace divine, and like a god he moves.
Ev'n I, the meaneſt of the muſe's train,
Inflam'd by thee, attempt a nobler ſtrain;

* Odyſſey, lib. xvi.

Advent'rous waken the Mæonian lyre,
Tun'd by your hand, and ſing as you inſpire:
So arm'd by great Achilles for the fight,
Patroclus conquer'd in Achilles' right:
Like theirs, our friendſhip! and I boaſt my name
To thine united—For thy FRIENDSHIP'S FAME.
This labour paſt, of heav'nly ſubjects ſing,
While hov'ring angels liſten on the wing,
To hear from earth ſuch heart-felt raptures riſe,
As, when they ſing, ſuſpended hold the ſkies:
Or nobly riſing in fair virtue's cauſe,
From thy own life tranſcribe th' unerring laws:
Teach a bad world beneath her ſway to bend;
To verſe like thine fierce ſavages attend,
And men more fierce: when Orpheus tunes the lay,
Ev'n fiends relenting hear their rage away.

W. BROOME.

POSTSCRIPT.

By Mr. POPE.

I Cannot diſmiſs this work without a few obſervations on the true character and ſtyle of it. Whoever reads the Odyſſey with an eye to the Iliad, expecting to find it of the ſame character, or of the ſame ſort of ſpirit, will be grievouſly deceived, and err againſt the firſt principle of criticiſm, which is to conſider the nature of the piece, and the intent of its author. The Odyſſey is a moral and political work, inſtructive to all degrees of men, and filled with images, examples and precepts of civil and domeſtic life. Homer is here a perſon

" Qui didicit, patriæ quid debeat, & quid amicis,
" Quo ſit amore parens, quo frater amandus, &
" hoſpes:
" Qui quid ſit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile,
" quid non,
" Plenius & melius Chryſippo & Crantore dicit"

The Odyſſey is the reverſe of the Iliad, in moral, ſubject, manner and ſtyle; to which it has no ſort of relation, but as the ſtory happens to follow in order of time, and as ſome of the ſame perſons are actors in it. Yet from this incidental connection many have been miſled to regard it as a continuation or ſecond part, and thence to expect a parity of character inconſiſtent with its nature.

It is no wonder that the common reader ſhould fall into this miſtake, when ſo great a critic as Longinus

ſeems not wholly free from it; although what he has ſaid has been generally underſtood to import a ſeverer cenſure of the Odyſſey than it really does, if we conſider the occaſion on which it is introduced, and the circumſtances to which it is confined.

"The Odyſſey (ſays he) is an inſtance, how natu-
" ral it is to a great genius, when it begins to grow
" old and decline, to delight itſelf in narrations and
" fables. For, that Homer compoſed the Odyſſey
" after the Iliad, many proofs may be given, &c.
" From hence in my judgment it proceeds, that as
" the Iliad was written while his ſpirit was in its
" greateſt vigour, the whole ſtructure of that work is
" dramatic and full of action; whereas the greater
" part of the Odyſſey is employed in narration, which
" is the taſte of old age: ſo that in this latter piece
" we may compare him to the ſetting ſun, which has
" ſtill the ſame greatneſs, but not the ſame ardour,
" or force. He ſpeaks not in the ſame ſtrain; we ſee
" no more that ſublime of the Iliad which marches
" on with a conſtant pace, without ever being ſtopped,
" or retarded; there appears no more that hurry, and
" that ſtrong tide of motions and paſſions, pouring
" one after another: there is no more of the ſame
" fury, or the ſame volubility of diction, ſo ſuitable
" to action, and all along drawing in ſuch innumer-
" able images of nature. But Homer, like the ocean,
" is always great, even when he ebbs and retires;
" even when he is loweſt, and loſes himſelf moſt in
" narrations and incredible fictions; as inſtances of
" this, we cannot forget the deſcriptions of tempeſts,
" the adventures of Ulyſſes with the Cyclops, and
" many others. But though all this be age, it is the
" age of Homer——And it may be ſaid for the credit
" of theſe fictions, that they are beautiful dreams, or
" if you will, the dreams of Jupiter himſelf. I ſpoke
" of the Odyſſey only to ſhow, that the greateſt poets
" when their genius wants ſtrength and warmth for
" the pathetic, for the moſt part employ themſelves
" in painting the manners. This Homer has done,
" in characteriſing the ſuitors, and deſcribing their

" way of life; which is properly a branch of comedy, " whoſe peculiar buſineſs it is to repreſent the man- " ners of men."

We muſt firſt obſerve, it is the ſublime of which Longinus is writing: that, and not the nature of Homer's poem, is his ſubject. After having highly extolled the ſublimity and fire of the Iliad, he juſtly obſerves the Odyſſey to have leſs of thoſe qualities, and to turn more on the ſide of moral, and reflections on human life. Nor is it his buſineſs here to determine, whether the elevated ſpirit of the one, or the juſt moral of the other, be the greater excellence in itſelf.

Secondly, that fire and fury of which he is ſpeaking, cannot well be meant of the general ſpirit and inſpiration which is to run through a whole epic poem, but of that particular warmth and impetuoſity neceſſary in ſome parts, to image or repreſent actions or paſſions, of haſte, tumult, and violence. It is on occaſion of citing ſome ſuch particular paſſages in Homer, that Longinus breaks into this reflection; which ſeems to determine his meaning chiefly to that ſenſe.

Upon the whole, he affirms the Odyſſey to have leſs ſublimity and fire than the Iliad, but he does not ſay it wants the ſublime or wants fire. He affirms it to be narrative, but not that the narration is defective. He affirms it to abound in fictions, not that thoſe fictions are ill invented, or ill executed. He affirms it to be nice and particular in painting the manners, but not that thoſe manners are ill painted. If Homer has fully in theſe points accompliſhed his own deſign, and done all that the nature of his poem demanded or allowed, it ſtill remains perfect in its kind, and as much a maſter-piece as the Iliad.

The amount of the paſſage is this; that in his own particular taſte, and with reſpect to the ſublime, Longinus preferred the Iliad: and becauſe the Odyſſey was leſs active and lofty, he judged it the work of the old age of Homer.

If this opinion be true, it will only prove, that Homer's age might determine him in the choice of his ſubject, not that it affected him in the execution

of it: and that which would be a very wrong inſtance to prove the decay of his imagination, is a very good one to evince the ſtrength of his judgment. For had he (as Madam Dacier obſerves) compoſed the Odyſſey in his youth, and the Iliad in his age, both muſt in reaſon have been exactly the ſame as they now ſtand. To blame Homer for his choice of ſuch a ſubject, as did not admit the ſame incidents and the ſame pomp of ſtyle as his former, is to take offence at too much variety, and to imagine, that when a man has written one good thing, he muſt ever after only copy himſelf.

The Battle of Conſtantine, and the School of Athens, are both pieces of Raphael: ſhall we cenſure the School of Athens as faulty, becauſe it has not the fury and fire of the other? Or ſhall we ſay, that Raphael was grown grave and old, becauſe he choſe to repreſent the manners of old men and philoſophers? There is all the ſilence, tranquillity and compoſure in the one, and all the warmth, hurry and tumult in the other, which the ſubject of either required: both of them had been imperfect, if they had not been as they are. And let the painter or poet be young or old, who deſigns and performs in this manner, it proves him to have made the piece at a time of life when he was maſter not only of his art, but of his diſcretion.

Ariſtotle makes no ſuch diſtinction between the two poems: he conſtantly cites them with equal praiſe, and draws the rules and examples of epic writing equally from both. But it is rather to the Odyſſey that Horace gives the preference, in the Epiſtle to Lollius, and in the Art of Poetry. It is remarkable how oppoſite his opinion is to that of Longinus; and that the particulars he chuſes to extol, are thoſe very fictions and pictures of the manners which the other ſeems leaſt to approve. Thoſe fables and manners are of the very eſſence of the work: but even without that regard, the fables themſelves have both more invention and more inſtruction, and the manners more moral and example, than thoſe of the Iliad.

In ſome points (and thoſe the moſt eſſential to the epic poem) the Odyſſey is confeſſed to excel the Iliad;

and principally in the great end of it, the moral. The conduct, turn, and diſpoſition of the fable is alſo what the critics allow to be the better model for epic writers to follow: accordingly we find much more of the caſt of this poem than of the other in the Æneid, and (what next to that is perhaps the greateſt example) in the Telemachus. In the manners, it is no way inferiour: Longinus is ſo far from finding any defect in theſe, that he rather taxes Homer with painting them too minutely. As to the narrations, although they are more numerous as the occaſions are more frequent, yet they carry no more the marks of old age, and are neither more prolix nor more circumſtantial, than the converſations and dialogues of the Iliad. Not to mention the length of thoſe of Phœnix in the ninth book, and of Neſtor in the eleventh (which may be thought in compliance to their characters), thoſe of Glaucus in the ſixth, of Æneas in the twentieth, and ſome others, muſt be allowed to exceed any in the whole Odyſſey. And that the propriety of ſtyle, and the numbers, in the narrations of each are equal, will appear to any who compare them,

To form a right judgment, whether the genius of Homer had ſuffered any decay; we muſt conſider, in both his poems, ſuch parts as are of a ſimilar nature, and will bear compariſon. And it is certain we ſhall find in each, the ſame vivacity and fecundity of invention, the ſame life and ſtrength of imaging and colouring, the particular deſcriptions as highly painted, the figures as bold, the metaphors as animated, and the numbers as harmonious and as various.

The Odyſſey is a perpetual ſource of poetry: the ſtream is not the leſs full, for being gentle; though it is true (when we ſpeak only with regard to the ſublime) that a river, foaming and thundering in cataracts from rocks and precipices, is what more ſtrikes, amazes and fills the mind, than the ſame body of water, flowing afterwards through peaceful vales and agreeable ſcenes of paſturage.

The Odyſſey (as I have before ſaid) ought to be conſidered according to its own nature and deſign, not

with an eye to the Iliad. To cenſure Homer becauſe it is unlike what it was never meant to reſemble, is, as if a gardener who had purpoſely cultivated two beautiful trees of contrary natures, as a ſpecimen of his ſkill in the ſeveral kinds, ſhould be blamed for not bringing them into pairs; when in root, ſtem, leaf, and flower, each was ſo entirely different, that one muſt have been ſpoiled in the endeavour to match the other.

Longinus who ſaw this poem was "partly of the "nature of comedy," ought not, for that very reaſon, to have conſidered it with a view to the Iliad. How little any ſuch reſemblance was the intention of Homer, may appear from hence, that although the character of Ulyſſes there was already drawn, yet here he purpoſely turns to another ſide of it, and ſhows him not in that full light of glory, but in the ſhade of common life, with a mixture of ſuch qualities as are requiſite to all the loweſt accidents of it, ſtruggling with misfortunes, and on a level with the meaneſt of mankind. As for the other perſons, none of them are above what we call the higher comedy: Calypſo, though a goddeſs, is a character of intrigue; the ſuitors yet more approaching to it; the Phæacians are of the ſame caſt; the Cyclops, Melanthius, and Irus, deſcend even to droll characters; and the ſcenes that appear throughout, are generally of the comic kind; banquets, revels, ſports, loves, and the purſuit of a woman.

From the nature of the poem, we ſhall form an idea of the ſtyle. The diction is to follow the images, and to take its colour from the complexion of the thoughts. Accordingly the Odyſſey is not always cloathed in the majeſty of verſe proper to tragedy, but ſometimes deſcends into the plainer narrative, and ſometimes even to that familiar dialogue eſſential to comedy. However, where it cannot ſupport a ſublimity, it always preſerves a dignity, or at leaſt a propriety.

There is a real beauty in an eaſy, pure, perſpicuous deſcription even of a low action. There are numerous inſtances of this both in Homer and Virgil;

and perhaps thoſe natural paſſages are not the leaſt pleaſing of their works. It is often the ſame in hiſtory, where the repreſentations of common, or even domeſtic things, in clear, plain, and natural words, are frequently found to make the livelieſt impreſſion on the reader.

The queſtion is, how far a poet, in purſuing the deſcription or image of an action, can attach himſelf to little circumſtances, without vulgarity or trifling? What particulars are proper, and enliven the image; or what are impertinent, and clog it? In this matter painting is to be conſulted, and the whole regard had to thoſe circumſtances which contribute to form a full, and yet not a confuſed, idea of a thing.

Epithets are of vaſt ſervice to this effect, and the right uſe of theſe is often the only expedient to render the narration poetical.

The great point of judgment is to diſtinguiſh when to ſpeak ſimply, and when figuratively: but whenever the poet is obliged by the nature of his ſubject to deſcend to the lower manner of writing, an elevated ſtyle would be affected, and therefore ridiculous; and the more he was forced upon figures and metaphors to avoid that lowneſs, the more the image would be broken, and conſequently obſcure.

One may add, that the uſe of the grand ſtyle on little ſubjects, is not only ludicrous, but a ſort of tranſgreſſion againſt the rules of proportion and mechanics: it is uſing a vaſt force to lift a feather.

I believe, now I am upon this head, it will be found a juſt obſervation, that the low actions of life cannot be put into a figurative ſtyle without being ridiculous, but things natural can. Metaphors raiſe the latter into dignity, as we ſee in the Georgics: but throw the former into ridicule, as in the Lutrin. I think this may very well be accounted for: laughter implies cenſure; inanimate and irrational beings are not objects of cenſure; therefore theſe may be elevated as much as you pleaſe, and no ridicule follows: but when rational beings are repreſented above their real character, it becomes ridiculous in art, becauſe it is as vicious in

morality. The bees in Virgil, were they rational beings, would be ridiculous by having their actions and manners repreſented on a level with creatures ſo ſuperiour as men; ſince it would imply folly or pride, which are the proper objects of ridicule.

The uſe of pompous expreſſion for low actions or thoughts is the true ſublime of Don Quixote. How far unfit it is for epic poetry, appears in its being the perfection of the mock epic. It is ſo far from being the ſublime of tragedy, that it is the cauſe of all bombaſt; when poets, inſtead of being (as they imagine) conſtantly lofty, only preſerve throughout a painful equality of fuſtian: that continued ſwell of language (which runs indiſcriminately even through their loweſt characters, and rattles like ſome mightineſs of meaning in the moſt indifferent ſubjects) is of a piece with that perpetual elevation of tone which the players have learned from it; and which is not ſpeaking, but vociferating.

There is ſtill more reaſon for a variation of ſtyle in epic poetry than in tragic, to diſtinguiſh between that language of the gods proper to the muſe who ſings, and is inſpired: and that of men who are introduced ſpeaking only according to nature. Farther, there ought to be a difference of ſtyle obſerved in the ſpeeches of human perſons, and thoſe of deities; and again, in thoſe which may be called ſet harangues, or orations, and thoſe which are only converſation or dialogue. Homer has more of the latter than any other poet: what Virgil does by two or three words of narration, Homer ſtill performs by ſpeeches: not only replies, but even rejoinders are frequent in him, a practice almoſt unknown to Virgil. This renders his poems more animated, but leſs grave and majeſtic; and conſequently neceſſitates the frequent uſe of a lower ſtyle. The writers of tragedy lie under the ſame neceſſity, if they would copy nature; whereas that painted and poetical diction which they perpetually uſe, would be improper even in orations deſigned to move with all the arts of rhetoric: this is plain from the practice of Demoſthenes and Cicero; and Virgil in thoſe of

Drances and Turnus gives an eminent example, how far removed the ſtyle of them ought to be from ſuch an exceſs of figures and ornaments: which indeed fits only that language of the gods we have been ſpeaking of, or that of a muſe under inſpiration.

To read through a whole work in this ſtrain, is like travelling all along on the ridge of a hill; which is not half ſo agreeable as ſometimes gradually to riſe, and ſometimes gently to deſcend, as the way leads, and as the end of the journey directs.

Indeed the true reaſon that ſo few poets have imitated Homer in theſe lower parts, has been the extreme difficulty of preſerving that mixture of eaſe and dignity eſſential to them. For it is as hard for an epic poem to ſtoop to the narrative with ſucceſs, as for a prince to deſcend to be familiar, without diminution to his greatneſs.

The ſublime ſtyle is more eaſily counterfeited than the natural; ſomething that paſſes for it, or ſounds like it, is common in all falſe writers: but nature, purity, perſpicuity, and ſimplicity, never walk in the clouds; they are obvious to all capacities; and where they are not evident, they do not exiſt.

The moſt plain narration not only admits of theſe, and of harmony (which are all the qualities of ſtyle) but it requires every one of them to render it pleaſing. On the contrary, whatever pretends to a ſhare of the ſublime, may paſs, notwithſtanding any defects in the reſt; nay, ſometimes without any of them, and gain the admiration of all ordinary readers.

Homer, in his loweſt narrations of ſpeeches, is ever eaſy, flowing, copious, clear and harmonious. He ſhows not leſs invention, in aſſembling the humbler, than the greater, thoughts and images; nor leſs judgment, in proportioning the ſtyle and the verſification to theſe, than to the other. Let it be remembered, that the ſame genius that ſoared the higheſt, and from whom the greateſt models of the ſublime are derived, was alſo he who ſtooped the loweſt, and gave to the ſimple narrative its utmoſt perfection. Which of theſe was the harder taſk to Homer himſelf, I cannot pre-

tend to determine; but to his tranſlator I can affirm (however unequal all his imitations muſt be) that of the latter has been much more difficult.

Whoever expects here the ſame pomp of verſe, and the ſame ornaments of diction, as in the Iliad, he will, and he ought to be diſappointed. Were the original otherwiſe, it had been an offence againſt nature; and were the tranſlation ſo, it were an offence againſt Homer, which is the ſame thing

It muſt be allowed that there is a majeſty and harmony in the Greek language which greatly contribute to elevate and ſupport the narration. But I muſt alſo obſerve that this is an advantage grown upon the language ſince Homer's time; for things are removed from vulgarity by being out of uſe: and if the words we could find in any preſent language were equally ſonorous or muſical in themſelves, they would ſtill appear leſs poetical and uncommon than thoſe of a dead one, from this only circumſtance, of being in every man's mouth. I may add to this another diſadvantage to a tranſlator, from a different cauſe: Homer ſeems to have taken upon him the character of an hiſtorian, antiquary, divine, and profeſſor of arts and ſciences, as well as a poet. In one or other of theſe characters he deſcends into many particularities, which as a poet only perhaps he would have avoided. All theſe ought to be preſerved by a faithful tranſlator, who in ſome meaſure takes the place of Homer; and all that can be expected from him is to make them as poetical as the ſubject will bear. Many arts therefore are requiſite to ſupply theſe diſadvantages, in order to dignify and ſolemnize theſe plainer parts, which hardly admit of any poetical ornaments.

Some uſe has been made to this end of the ſtyle of Milton. A juſt and moderate mixture of old words may have an effect like the working old abbey ſtones into a building, which I have ſometimes ſeen to give a kind of venerable air, and yet not deſtroy the neatneſs, elegance, and equality requiſite to a new work; I mean without rendering it too unfamiliar, or remote from the preſent purity of writing, or from that eaſe and ſmooth-

neſs which ought always to accompany narration or dialogue. In reading a ſtyle judiciouſly antiquated, one finds a pleaſure not unlike that of travelling on an old Roman way: but then the road muſt be as good, as the way is antient; the ſtyle muſt be ſuch in which we may evenly proceed, without being put to ſhort ſtops by ſudden abruptneſſes, or puzzled by frequent turnings and tranſpoſitions. No man delights in furrows and ſtumbling-blocks: and let our love to antiquity be ever ſo great, a fine ruin is one thing, and a heap of rubbiſh another. The imitators of Milton, like moſt other imitators, are not copies but caricatura's of their original; they are a hundred times more obſolete and cramp than he, and equally ſo in all places: whereas it ſhould have been obſerved of Milton, that he is not laviſh of his exotic words and phraſes every where alike, but employs them much more where the ſubject is marvellous, vaſt and ſtrange, as in the ſcenes of heaven, hell, chaos, &c. than where it is turned to the natural and agreeable, as in the pictures of paradiſe, the loves of our firſt parents, the entertainments of angels, and the like. In general, this unuſual ſtyle better ſerves to awaken our ideas in the deſcriptions and in the imaging and pictureſque parts, than it agrees with the lower ſort of narrations, the character of which is ſimplicity and purity. Milton has ſeveral of the latter, where we find not an antiquated, affected, or uncouth word, for ſome hundred lines together; as in his fifth book, the latter part of the eighth, the former of the tenth and eleventh books, and in the narration of Michael in the twelfth. I wonder indeed that he, who ventured (contrary to the practice of all other epic poets) to imitate Homer's lowneſſes in the narrative, ſhould not alſo have copied his plainneſs and perſpicuity in the dramatic parts: ſince in his ſpeeches (where clearneſs above all is neceſſary) there is frequently ſuch tranſpoſition and forced conſtruction, that the very ſen e is not to be diſcovered without a ſecond or third reading: and in this certainly he ought to be no example.

To preſerve the true character of Homer's ſtyle in the preſent tranſlation, great pains have been taken to be

eaſy and natural. The chief merit I can pretend to, is, not to have been carried into a more plauſible and figurative manner of writing, which would better have pleaſed all readers, but the judicious ones. My errours had been fewer, had each of thoſe gentlemen who joined with me ſhown as much of the ſeverity of a friend to me, as I did to them, in a ſtrict animadverſion and correction. What aſſiſtance I received from them, was made known in general to the public in the original propoſals for this work, and the particulars are ſpecified at the concluſion of it; to which I muſt add (to be punctually juſt) ſome part of the tenth and fifteenth books. The reader will now be too good a judge, how much the greater part of it, and conſequently of its faults, is chargeable upon me alone. But this I can with integrity affirm, that I have beſtowed as much time and pains upon the whole, as were conſiſtent with the indiſpenſable duties and cares of life, and with that wretched ſtate of health which God has been pleaſed to make my portion. At the leaſt, it is a pleaſure to me to reflect, that I have introduced into our language this other work of the greateſt and moſt antient of poets, with ſome dignity; and I hope, with as little diſadvantage as the Iliad. And if, after the unmerited ſucceſs of that tranſlation, any one will wonder why I would enterpriſe the Odyſſey; I think it ſufficient to ſay, that Homer himſelf did the ſame, or the world would never have ſeen it.

I deſigned to have ended this poſtſcript here; but ſince I am now taking my leave of Homer, and of all controverſy relating to him, I beg leave to be indulged if I make uſe of this laſt opportunity, to ſay a very few words about ſome reflections which the late Madam Dacier beſtowed on the firſt part of my preface to the Iliad, and which ſhe publiſhed at the end of her tranſlation of that poem *.

To write gravely an anſwer to them would be too much for the reflections; and to ſay nothing concerning them, would be too little for the author. It is ow-

* Second edition, à Paris, 1719.

ing to the induſtry of that learned lady, that our polite neighbours are become acquainted with many of Homer's beauties, which were hidden from them before in Greek and in Euſtathius. She challenges in this account a particular regard from all the admirers of that great poet, and I hope that I ſhall be thought, as I mean, to pay ſome part of this debt to her memory in what I am now writing.

Had theſe reflections fallen from the pen of an ordinary critic, I ſhould not have apprehended their effect, and ſhould therefore have been ſilent concerning them: but ſince they are Madam Dacier's, I imagine that they muſt be of weight; and in a caſe where I think her reaſoning very bad, I reſpect her authority.

I have fought under Madam Dacier's banner, and have waged war in defence of the divine Homer againſt all the heretics of the age. And yet it is Madam Dacier who accuſes me, and who accuſes me of nothing leſs than betraying our common cauſe. She affirms that the moſt declared enemies of this author have never ſaid any thing againſt him more injurious or more unjuſt than I. What muſt the world think of me, after ſuch a judgment paſſed by ſo great a critic; the world, who decides ſo often, and who examines ſo ſeldom; the world, who even in matters of literature is almoſt always the ſlave of authority? Who will ſuſpect that ſo much learning ſhould miſtake, that ſo much accuracy ſhould be miſled, or that ſo much candour ſhould be biaſſed?

All this however has happened, and Madam Dacier's criticiſms on my preface flow from the very ſame errour, from which ſo many falſe criticiſms of her countrymen upon Homer have flowed, and which ſhe has ſo juſtly and ſo ſeverely reproved; I mean the errour of depending on injurious and unſkilful tranſlations.

An indifferent tranſlation may be of ſome uſe, and a good one will be of a great deal. But I think that no tranſlation ought to be the ground of criticiſm, becauſe no man ought to be condemned upon another man's explanation of his meaning: could Homer have had the honour of explaining his, before that auguſt tribunal where Monſieur de la Motte preſides, I make no doubt

but he had eſcaped many of thoſe ſevere animadverſions with which ſome French authors have loaded him, and from which even Madam Dacier's tranſlation of the Iliad could not preſerve him.

How unhappy was it for me, that the knowledge of our iſland-tongue was as neceſſary to madam Dacier in my caſe, as the knowledge of Greek was to Monſieur de la Motte in that of our great author; or to any of thoſe whom ſhe ſtyles "blind cenſurers," and blames for condemning what they did not underſtand.

I may ſay with modeſty, that ſhe knew leſs of my true ſenſe from that faulty tranſlation of part of my preface, than thoſe blind cenſurers might have known of Homer's even from the tranſlation of la Valterie, which preceded her own.

It pleaſed me however to find, that her objections were not levelled at the general doctrine, or at any eſſentials of my preface, but only at a few particular expreſſions. She propoſed little more than (to uſe her own phraſe) to "combat two or three ſimilies;" and I hope that to combat a ſimile is no more than to fight with a ſhadow, ſince a ſimile is no better than the ſhadow of an argument.

She lays much weight where I laid but little, and examines with more ſcrupuloſity than I writ, or than perhaps the matter requires.

Theſe unlucky ſimilies taken by themſelves may perhaps render my meaning equivocal to an ignorant tranſlator; or there may have fallen from my pen ſome expreſſions, which, taken by themſelves likewiſe, may to the ſame perſon have the ſame effect. But if the tranſlator had been maſter of our tongue, the general tenour of my argument, that which precedes and that which follows the paſſages objected to, would have ſufficiently determined him as to the preciſe meaning of them: and if Madam Dacier had taken up her pen a little more leiſurely, or had employed it with more temper, ſhe would not have anſwered paraphraſes of her own, which even the tranſlation will not juſtify, and which ſay, more than once, the very contrary to what I have ſaid in the paſſages themſelves.

If any perſon has curioſity enough to read the whole paragraphs in my preface, or ſome mangled parts of which theſe reflections are made, he will eaſily diſcern that I am as orthodox as Madam Dacier herſelf in thoſe very articles on which ſhe treats me like an heretic: he will eaſily ſee that all the difference between us conſiſts in this, that I offer opinions, and ſhe delivers doctrines; that my imagination repreſents Homer as the greateſt of human poets, whereas in hers he was exalted above humanity; infallibility and impeccability were two of his attributes. There was therefore no need of defending Homer againſt me, who, (if I miſtake not) had carried my admiration of him, as far as it can be carried, without giving a real occaſion of writing in his defence.

After anſwering my harmleſs ſimilies, ſhe proceeds to a matter which does not regard ſo much the honour of Homer, as that of the times he lived in; and here I muſt confeſs ſhe does not wholly miſtake my meaning, but I think ſhe miſtakes the ſtate of the queſtion. She had ſaid, the manners of thoſe times were ſo much the better, the leſs they were like ours. I thought this required a little qualification. I confeſt that in my opinion the world was mended in ſome points, ſuch as the cuſtom of putting whole nations to the ſword, condemning kings and their families to perpetual ſlavery, and a few others. Madam Dacier judges otherwiſe in this; but as to the reſt, particularly in preferring the ſimplicity of the antient world to the luxury of ours, which is the main point contended for, ſhe owns we agree. This I thought was well, but I am ſo unfortunate that this too is taken amiſs, and called adopting or (if you will) ſtealing her ſentiment. The truth is ſhe might have ſaid "her words," for I uſed them on purpoſe, being then profeſſedly citing from her: though I might have done the ſame without intending that compliment, for they are alſo to be found in Euſtathius, and the ſentiment I believe is that of all mankind. I cannot really tell what to ſay to this whole remark, only that in the firſt part of it, Madam Dacier is diſpleaſed that I do not agree with her, and in the laſt that I do: but this

is a temper which every polite man ſhould over-look in a lady.

To puniſh my ingratitude, ſhe reſolves to expoſe my blunders, and ſelects two which I ſuppoſe are the moſt flagrant, out of the many for which ſhe could have chaſtiſed me. It happens that the firſt of theſe is in part the tranſlator's, and in part her own, without any ſhare of mine: ſhe quotes the end of a ſentence, and he puts in French what I never wrote in Engliſh: "Homer (I "ſaid) opened a new and boundleſs walk for his ima- "gination, and created a world for himſelf in the in- "vention of fable;" which he tranſlates, "Homere "crea pour ſon uſage un monde mouvant, en inventant "la fable."

Madam Dacier juſtly wonders at this nonſenſe in me; and I, in the tranſlator. As to what I meant by Homer's invention of fable, it is afterwards particularly diſtinguiſhed from that extenſive ſenſe in which ſhe took it, by theſe words. "If Homer was not the firſt, who "introduced the deities (as Herodotus imagines) into "the religion of Greece, he ſeems the firſt who brought "them into a ſyſtem of machinery for poetry."

The other blunder ſhe accuſes me of is, the miſtaking a paſſage in Ariſtotle, and ſhe is pleaſed to ſend me back to this philoſopher's treatiſe of poetry, and to her preface on the Odyſſey for my better inſtruction. Now though I am ſaucy enough to think that one may ſometimes differ from Ariſtotle without blundering, and though I am ſure one may ſometimes fall into an errour by following him ſervilely; yet I own, that to quote any author for what he never ſaid is a blunder; (but by the way, to correct an author for what he never ſaid, is ſomewhat worſe than a blunder.) My words were theſe. "As there is a greater variety of characters in the Iliad "than in any other poem, ſo there is of ſpeeches. Every "thing in it has manners, as Ariſtotle expreſſes it; that "is, every thing is acted or ſpoken: very little paſſes "in narration." She juſtly ſays, that "Every thing "which is acted or ſpoken, has not neceſſarily manners "merely becauſe it is acted or ſpoken." Agreed: but I would aſk the queſtion, whether any thing can have

manners which is neither acted nor ſpoken? If not, then the whole Iliad being almoſt ſpent in ſpeech and action, almoſt every thing in it has manners, ſince Homer has been proved before in a long paragraph of the preface, to have excelled in drawing characters and painting manners, and indeed his whole poem is one continued occaſion of ſhewing this bright part of his talent.

To ſpeak fairly, it is impoſſible ſhe could read even the tranſlation, and take my ſenſe ſo wrong as ſhe repreſents it; but I was firſt tranſlated ignorantly, and then read partially. My expreſſion indeed was not quite exact; it ſhould have been, "Every thing has manners "as Ariſtotle calls them." But ſuch a fault methinks might have been ſpared, ſince if one was to look with that diſpoſition ſhe diſcovers towards me, even on her own excellent writings, one might find ſome miſtakes which no context can redreſs; as where ſhe makes Euſtathius call Cratiſthenes the Phliaſian, Calliſthenes the phyſician *. What a triumph might ſome ſlips of this ſort have afforded to Homer's, hers, and my enemies, from which ſhe was only ſcreened by their happy ignorance? How unlucky had it been, when ſhe inſulted Mr. de la Motte for omitting a material paſſage in the † ſpeech of Helen to Hector, Iliad vi. if ſome champion for the moderns had by chance underſtood ſo much Greek, as to whiſper him, that there was no ſuch paſſage in Homer?

Our concern, zeal, and even jealouſy, for our great author's honour were mutual, our endeavours to advance it were equal, and I have as often trembled for it in her hands, as ſhe could in mine. It was one of the many reaſons I had to wiſh the longer life of this lady, that I muſt certainly have regained her good opinion, in ſpite of all miſrepreſenting tranſlators whatever. I could not have expected it on any other terms than being approved as great, if not as paſſionate, an admirer of Homer as herſelf. For that was the firſt condition of her favour and friendſhip; otherwiſe not one's taſte

* Dacier remarques ſur le 4me livre de l'Odyſſ. p. 467.
† De la corruption du gout.

alone, but one's morality had been corrupted, nor would any man's religion have been unſuſpected, who did not implicitly believe in an author whoſe doctrine is ſo conformable to holy ſcripture. However, as different people have different ways of expreſſing their belief, ſome purely by public and general acts of worſhip, others by a reverend ſort of reaſoning and enquiry about the grounds of it; it is the ſame in admiration, ſome prove it by exclamations, others by reſpect. I have obſerved that the loudeſt huzzas given to a great man in a triumph, proceed not from his friends, but the rabble; and as I have fancied it the ſame with the rabble of critics, a deſire to be diſtinguiſhed from them has turned me to the more moderate, and, I hope, more rational method. Though I am a poet, I would not be an enthuſiaſt; and though I am an Engliſhman, I would not be furiouſly of a party. I am far from thinking myſelf that genius, upon whom, at the end of theſe remarks, Madam Dacier congratulates my country: one capable of, "correcting Homer, and conſequently of "reforming mankind, and amending this conſtitu-"tion." It was not to Great Britain this ought to have been applied, ſince our nation has one happineſs for which ſhe might have preferred it to her own, that as much as we abound in other miſerable miſguided ſects, we have at leaſt none of the blaſphemers of Homer. We ſteadfaſtly and unanimouſly believe, both his poem, and our conſtitution, to be the beſt that ever human wit invented: that the one is not more incapable of amendment than the other; and (old as they both are) we deſpiſe any French or Engliſhman whatever, who ſhall preſume to retrench, to innovate, or to make the leaſt alteration in either. Far therefore from the genius for which Madam Dacier miſtook me, my whole deſire is but to preſerve the humble character of a faithful tranſlator, and a quiet ſubject.

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HOMER's

BATTLE

OF THE

FROGS and MICE.

By Mr. Archdeacon PARNEL.

Corrected by Mr. POPE.

Names of the MICE.

PSYCARPAX, one who plunders granaries.
Troxartes, A bread-eater.
Lychomele, A licker of meal.
Pternotroctas, A bacon-eater.
Lycopinax, A licker of diſhes.
Embaſichitros, A creeper into pots.
Lychenor, A name from licking.
Troglodytes, One who runs into holes.
Artophagus, who feeds on bread.
Tyroglyphus, A cheeſe-ſcooper.
Pternophagus, A bacon-eater.
Cniſſodioctes, One who follows the ſteam of kitchens.
Sitophagus, An eater of wheat.
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Hypſiboas, A loud bawler.
Pelion, From mud.
Seutlæus, Called from the beets.
Polyphonus, A great babbler.
Lymnocharis, One who loves the lake.
Crambophagus, Cabbage-eater.
Lymniſius, Called from the lake.
Calaminthius, From the herb.
Hydrocharis, Who loves the water.
Borborocates, Who lies in the mud.
Praſſophagus, An eater of garlic.
Peluſius, From mud.
Pelobates, who walks in the dirt.
Praſſæus, Called from garlic.
Craugaſides, From croaking.

THE BATTLE OF THE FROGS and MICE.

BOOK I.

TO fill my riſing ſong with ſacred fire,
Ye tuneful Nine, ye ſweet celeſtial quire!
From Helicon's imbow'ring height repair,
Attend my labours, and reward my pray'r.
The dreadful toils of raging Mars I write,
The ſprings of conteſt, and the fields of fight;
How threat'ning mice advanc'd with warlike grace,
And wag'd dire combats with the croaking race.
Not louder tumults ſhook Olympus' tow'rs,
When earth-born giants dar'd immortal pow'rs.
Theſe equal acts an equal glory claim,
And thus the muſe records the tale of fame.
Once on a time, fatigu'd and out of breath,
And juſt eſcap'd the ſtretching claws of death,
A gentle mouſe, whom cats purſu'd in vain,
Flies ſwift-of-foot acroſs the neighb'ring plain,
Hangs o'er a brink his eager thirſt to cool,
And dips his whiſkers in the ſtanding pool;
When near a courteous frog advanc'd his head,
And from the waters, hoarſe reſounding ſaid.
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What chance hath caſt thee panting on our coaſt?

With ſtricteſt truth let all thy words agree,
Nor let me find a faithleſs mouſe in thee.
If worthy friendſhip, proffer'd friendſhip take,
And ent'ring view the pleaſurable lake:
Range o'er my palace, in my bounty ſhare,
And glad return from hoſpitable fare.
This ſilver realm extends beneath my ſway,
And me, their monarch, all its frogs obey.
Great Phyſignathus I, from Pelius' race,
Begot in fair Hydromedeuſe' embrace,
Where by the nuptial bank that paints his ſide,
The ſwift Eridanus delights to glide.
Thee too, thy form, thy ſtrength, and port proclaim,
A ſcepter'd king; a ſon of martial fame;
Then trace thy line, and aid my gueſſing eyes.
Thus ceas'd the frog, and thus the mouſe replies.
Known to the gods, the men, the birds that fly
Thro' wild expanſes of the midway ſky,
My name reſounds; and if unknown to thee,
The ſoul of great Pſycarpax lives in me.
Of brave Troxartes' line, whoſe ſleeky down
In love compreſs'd Lycomile the brown.
My mother ſhe, and princeſs of the plains
Where-e'er her father Pternotroctas reigns:
Born where a cabin lifts its airy ſhed,
With figs, with nuts, with vary'd dainties fed.
But ſince our natures nought in common know,
From what foundation can a friendſhip grow?
Theſe curling waters o'er thy palace roll;
But man's high food ſupports my princely ſoul.
In vain the circled loaves attempt to lie
Conceal'd in flaſkets from my curious eye;
In vain the tripe that boaſts the whiteſt hue,
In vain the gilded bacon ſhuns my view,
In vain the cheeſes, offspring of the pail,
Or honey'd cakes, which gods themſelves regale.

And as in arts I ſhine, in arms I fight,
Mix'd with the braveſt, and unknown to flight.
Tho' large to mine the human form appear,
Not man himſelf can ſmite my ſoul with fear;
Sly to the bed with ſilent ſteps I go,
Attempt his finger, or attack his toe,
And fix indented wounds with dext'rous ſkill,
Sleeping he feels, and only ſeems to feel.
Yet have we foes which direful dangers cauſe,
Grim owls with talons arm'd, and cats with claws;
And that falſe trap, the den of ſilent fate,
Where death his ambuſh plants around the bait;
All dreaded theſe, and dreadful o'er the reſt
The potent warriours of the tabby veſt:
If to the dark we fly, the dark they trace,
And rend our heroes of the nibbling race.
But me, nor ſtalks, nor wat'riſh herbs delight,
Nor can the crimſon radiſh charm my ſight;
The lake-reſounding frogs ſelected fare,
Which not a mouſe of any taſte can bear.
As thus the downy prince his mind expreſt,
His anſwer thus the croaking king addreſt.
Thy words luxuriant on thy dainties rove,
And, ſtranger, we can boaſt of bounteous Jove:
We ſport in water, or we dance on land,
And born amphibious, food from both command.
But truſt thyſelf where wonders aſk thy view,
And ſafely tempt thoſe ſeas, I'll bear thee through:
Aſcend my ſhoulders, firmly keep thy ſeat,
And reach my marſhy court, and feaſt in ſtate.
He ſaid, and leant his back; with nimble bound
Leaps the light mouſe, and claſps his arms around,
Then wond'ring floats, and ſees with glad ſurvey
The winding banks diſſemble ports at ſea.
But when aloft the curling water rides,
And wets with azure wave his downy ſides,

His thoughts grow conſcious of approaching woe,
His idle tears with vain repentance flow,
His locks he rends, his trembling feet he rears,
Thick beats his heart with unaccuſtom'd fears;
He ſighs, and chill'd with danger, longs for ſhore:
His tail extended forms a fruitleſs oar.
Half drench'd in liquid death his pray'rs he ſpake,
And thus bemoan'd him from the dreadful lake.
So paſs'd Europa thro' the rapid ſea,
Trembling and fainting all the vent'rous way;
With oary feet the bull triumphant rode,
And ſafe in Crete depos'd his lovely load.
Ah ſafe at laſt! may thus the frog ſupport
My trembling limbs to reach his ample court.
As thus he ſorrows, death ambiguous grows,
Lo! from the deep a water-hydra roſe;
He rolls his ſanguin'd eyes, his boſom heaves;
And darts with active rage along the waves.
Confus'd, the monarch ſees his hiſſing foe,
And dives to ſhun the ſable fates below.
Forgetful frog! the friend thy ſhoulders bore,
Unſkill'd in ſwimming, floats remote from ſhore.
He graſps with fruitleſs hands to find relief,
Supinely falls, and grinds his teeth with grief;
Plunging he ſinks, and ſtruggling mounts again,
And ſinks, and ſtrives, but ſtrives with fate in vain.
The weighty moiſture clogs his hairy veſt,
And thus the prince his dying rage expreſt.
Nor thou, that flingſt me flound'ring from thy back,
As from hard rocks rebounds the ſhatt'ring wrack,
Nor thou ſhalt 'ſcape thy due, perfidious king!
Purſu'd by vengeance on the ſwifteſt wing:
At land thy ſtrength could never equal mine,
At ſea to conquer, and by craft, was thine.
But heav'n has gods, and gods have ſearching eyes:
Ye mice, ye mice, my great avengers riſe!

This ſaid, he ſighing gaſp'd, and gaſping dy'd,
His death the young Lycophinax eſpy'd,
As on the flow'ry brink he paſs'd the day,
Baſk'd in the beam, and loiter'd life away:
Loud ſhrieks the mouſe, his ſhrieks the ſhores repeat;
The nibbling nation learn their hero's fate:
Grief, diſmal grief enſues; deep murmurs ſound,
And ſhriller fury fills the deafen'd ground;
From lodge to lodge the ſacred heralds run,
To fix their council with the riſing ſun;
Where great Troxartes crown'd in glory reigns,
And winds his length'ning court beneath the plains:
Pſycarpax' father, father now no more!
For poor Pſycarpax lies remote from ſhore:
Supine he lies! the ſilent waters ſtand,
And no kind billow wafts the dead to land!

BOOK II.

WHEN roſy-finger'd morn had ting'd the clouds,
Around their monarch-mouſe the nation crowds,
Slow roſe the monarch, heav'd his anxious breaſt,
And thus the council fill'd with rage, addreſt.
For loſt Pſycarpax much my ſoul endures,
'Tis mine the private grief, the public, yours;
Three warlike ſons adorn'd my nuptial bed,
Three ſons, alas, before their father dead!
Our eldeſt periſh'd by the rav'ning cat,
As near my court the prince unheedful ſat.
Our next, an engine fraught with danger drew,
The portal gap'd, the bait was hung in view,
Dire arts aſſiſt the trap, the fates decoy,
And men unpitying kill'd my gallant boy.

The laſt, his country's hope, his parents pride,
Plung'd in the lake by Phyſignathus, dy'd.
Rouſe all the war, my friends! avenge the deed,
And bleed that monarch, and his nation bleed.
His words in ev'ry breaſt inſpir'd alarms,
And careful Mars ſupply'd their hoſt with arms.
In verdant hulls deſpoil'd of all their beans,
The buſkin'd warriours ſtalk'd along the plains,
Quills aptly bound, their bracing corſelet made,
Fac'd with the plunder of a cat they flay'd;
The lamp's round boſs affords their ample ſhield,
Large ſhells of nuts their cov'ring helmet yield;
And o'er the region, with reflected rays,
Tall groves of needles for their lances blaze.
Dreadful in arms the marching mice appear:
The wond'ring frogs perceive the tumult near,
Forſake the waters, thick'ning form a ring,
And aſk, and hearken, whence the noiſes ſpring;
When near the crowd, diſclos'd to public view,
The valiant chief Embaſichytros drew:
The ſacred herald's ſcepter grac'd his hand,
And thus his words expreſt his king's command.
Ye frogs! the mice with vengeance fir'd, advance,
And deckt in armour ſhake the ſhining lance;
Their hapleſs prince by Phyſignathus ſlain,
Extends incumbent on the wat'ry plain,
Then arm your hoſt, the doubtful battle try;
Lead forth thoſe frogs that have the ſoul to die.
The chief retires, the crowd the challenge hear,
And proudly ſwelling, yet perplex'd appear;
Much they reſent, yet much their monarch blame,
Who riſing, ſpoke to clear his tainted fame.
O friends! I never forc'd the mouſe to death,
Nor ſaw the gaſpings of his lateſt breath.
He, vain of youth, our art of ſwimming try'd,
And vent'rous in the lake the wanton dy'd.

To vengeance now by falſe appearance led,
They point their anger at my guiltleſs head.
But wage the riſing war by deep device,
And turn its fury on the crafty mice.
Your king directs the way; my thoughts elate
With hopes of conqueſt, form deſigns of fate.
Where high the banks their verdant ſurface heave,
And the ſteep ſides confine the ſleeping wave,
There, near the margin, and in armour bright,
Suſtain the firſt impetuous ſhocks of fight:
Then where the dancing feathers joins the creſt,
Let each brave frog his obvious mouſe arreſt;
Each ſtrongly graſping, headlong plunge a foe,
'Till countleſs circles whirl the lake below;
Down ſink the mice in yielding waters drown'd;
Loud flaſh the waters; echoing ſhores reſound:
The frogs triumphant tread the conquer'd plain,
And raiſe their glorious trophies of the ſlain.
He ſpake no more, his prudent ſcheme imparts
Redoubling ardour to the boldeſt hearts.
Green was the ſuit his arming heroes choſe,
Around their legs the greaves of mallows cloſe,
Green were the beets about their ſhoulders laid,
And green the colewort, which the target made,
Form'd of the vary'd ſhells the waters yield,
Their gloſſy helmets gliſten'd o'er the field;
And tap'ring ſea-reeds for the poliſh'd ſpear,
With upright order pierc'd the ambient air.
Thus dreſs'd for war, they take th' appointed height,
Poize the long arms, and urg'd the promis'd fight.
But now, where Jove's irradiate ſpires ariſe,
With ſtars ſurrounded in æthereal ſkies,
(A ſolemn council call'd) the brazen gates
Unbar; the gods aſſume their golden ſeats:
The ſire ſuperiour leans and points to ſhow
What wond'rous combats mortals wage below:

How ſtrong, how large, the num'rous heroes ſtride;
What length of lance they ſhake with warlike pride:
What eager fire their rapid march reveals;
So the fierce Centaurs ravag'd o'er the dales;
And ſo confirm'd, the daring Titans roſe,
Heap'd hills on hills, and bid the gods be foes.
This ſeen, the pow'r his ſacred viſage rears,
He caſts a pitying ſmile on worldly cares,
And aſks what heav'nly guardians take the liſt,
Or who the mice, or who the frogs aſſiſt?
Then thus to Pallas. If my daughter's mind
Have join'd the mice, why ſtays ſhe ſtill behind?
Drawn forth by ſav'ry ſteams they wind their way,
And ſure attendance round thine altar pay,
Where while the victims gratify their taſte,
They ſport to pleaſe the goddeſs of the feaſt.
Thus ſpake the ruler of the ſpacious ſkies,
When thus, reſolv'd, the blue-ey'd maid replies.
In vain, my father! all their dangers plead;
To ſuch, thy Pallas never grants her aid.
My flow'ry wreaths they petulantly ſpoil,
And rob my cryſtal lamps of feeding oil:
(Ills following ills) but what afflicts me more,
My veil, that idle race profanely tore.
The web was curious, wrought with art divine;
Relentleſs wretches! all the work was mine;
Along the loom the purple warp I ſpread,
Caſt the light ſhoot, and croſt the ſilver thread.
In this their teeth a thouſand breaches tear;
The thouſand breaches ſkilful hands repair;
For which, vile earthly duns thy daughter grieve:
But gods, that uſe no coin, have none to give;
And learning's goddeſs never leſs can owe;
Neglected learning gets no wealth below.
Nor let the frogs to gain my ſuccour ſue,
Thoſe clam'rous fools have loſt my favour too.

For late, when all the conflict ceas'd at night,
When my ſtretch'd ſinews ach'd with eager fight,
When ſpent with glorious toil, I left the field,
And ſunk for ſlumber on my ſwelling ſhield;
Lo from the deep, repelling ſweet repoſe,
With noiſy croakings half the nation roſe:
Devoid of reſt, with aching brows I lay,
'Till cocks proclaim'd the crimſon dawn of day.
Let all, like me, from either hoſt forbear,
Nor tempt the flying furies of the ſpear.
Let heav'nly blood (or what for blood may flow)
Adorn the conqueſt of a meaner foe,
Who, wildly ruſhing, meet the wond'rous odds,
Tho' gods oppoſe; and brave the wounded gods.
O'er gilded clouds reclin'd, the danger view,
And be the wars of mortal ſcenes for you.
So mov'd the blue-ey'd queen, her words perſuade,
Great Jove aſſented, and the reſt obey'd.

BOOK III.

NOW front to front the marching armies ſhine,
Halt ere they meet, and form the length'ning line;
The chiefs conſpicuous ſeen, and heard afar,
Give the loud ſign to looſe the ruſhing war;
Their dreadful trumpets deep-mouth'd hornets ſound,
The ſounded charge remurmurs o'er the ground;
Ev'n Jove proclaims a field of horrour nigh,
And rolls low thunder thro' the troubled ſky.
First to the fight the large Hypſiboas flew,
And brave Lychenor with a jav'lin flew;
The luckleſs warriour, fill'd with gen'rous flame,
Stood foremoſt glitt'ring in the poſt of fame.

When in his liver ſtruck, the jav'lin hung;
The mouſe fell thund'ring, and the target rung:
Prone to the ground he ſinks his cloſing eye,
And, ſoil'd in duſt, his lovely treſſes lie.
A ſpear at Pelion; Troglodytes caſt;
The miſſive ſpear within the boſom paſt;
Death's ſable ſhades the fainting frog ſurround,
And life's red tide runs ebbing from the wound.
Embaſichytros felt Seutlæus' dart
Tranſfix, and quiver in his panting heart;
But great Artophagus aveng'd the ſlain,
And big Seutlæus tumbling loads the plain,
And Polyphonus dies, a frog renown'd
For boaſtful ſpeech and turbulence of ſound;
Deep thro' the belly pierc'd, ſupine he lay,
And breath'd his ſoul againſt the face of day.
The ſtrong Lymnocharis, who view'd with ire,
A victor triumph, and a friend expire;
With heaving arms a rocky fragment caught,
And fiercely flung where Troglodytes fought,
A warriour vers'd in arts, of ſure retreat,
Yet arts in vain elude impending fate;
Full on his ſinewy neck the fragment fell,
And o'er his eye-lids clouds eternal dwell.
Lychenor (ſecond of the glorious name)
Striding advanc'd, and took no wand'ring aim;
Thro' all the frog the ſhining jav'lin flies,
And near the vanquiſh'd mouſe the victor dies.
The dreadful ſtroke Crambophagus affrights,
Long bred to banquets, leſs inur'd to fights;
Heedleſs he runs, and ſtumbles o'er the ſteep,
And wildly ſlound'ring flaſhes up the deep:
Lychenor, following, with a downward blow
Reach'd, in the lake, his unrecover'd foe;
Gaſping he rolls, a purple ſtream of blood
Diſtains the ſurface of the ſilver flood;
Thro' the wide wound the ruſhing entrails throng,
And ſlow the breathleſs carcaſs floats along.
Lymniſius good Tyroglyphus aſſails,
Prince of the mice that haunt the ſlow'ry vales,

Loſt to the milky fares and rural ſeat,
He came to periſh on the bank of fate.
The dread Pternoglyphus demands the fight,
Which tender Calamînthius ſhuns by flight,
Drops the green target, ſpringing quits the foe,
Glides thro' the lake, and ſafely dives below.
The dire Pternophagus divides his way
Thro' breaking ranks, and leads the dreadful day;
No nibbling prince excell'd in fierceneſs more,
His parents fed him on the ſavage boar:
But where his lance the field with blood imbru'd,
Swift as he mov'd Hydrocharis purſu'd,
'Till fall'n in death he lies; a ſhatt'ring ſtone
Sounds on the neck, and cruſhes all the bone;
His blood pollutes the verdure of the plain,
And from his noſtrils burſts the guſhing brain.
Lycopinax with Borbocætes fights
A blameleſs frog, whom humbler life delights;
The fatal jav'lin unrelenting flies,
And darkneſs ſeals the gentle croaker's eyes.
Incens'd Praſſophagus, with ſprightly bound,
Bears Cniſſodioctes off the riſing ground;
Then drags him o'er the lake, depriv'd of breath;
And, downward plunging, ſinks his ſoul to death.
But now the great Pſycarpax ſhines afar,
(Scarce he ſo great whoſe loſs provok'd the war)
Swift to revenge his fatal jav'lin fled,
And thro' the liver ſtruck Peluſius dead;
His freckled corps before the victor fell,
His ſoul indignant ſought the ſhades of hell.
This ſaw Pelobates, and from the flood,
Lifts with both hands a monſtrous maſs of mud.
The cloud obſcene o'er all the warriour flies,
Diſhonours his brown face, and blots his eyes.
Enrag'd, and wildly ſputt'ring, from the ſhore
A ſtone immenſe of ſize the warriour bore;
A load for lab'ring earth, whoſe bulk to raiſe,
Aſks ten degen'rate mice of modern days:
Full to the leg arrives the cruſhing wound;
The frog, ſupportleſs, writhes upon the ground.

Thus fluſh'd, the victor wars with matchleſs force,
'Till loud Craugaſides arreſts his courſe:
Hoarſe croaking threats precede; with fatal ſpeed
Deep thro' the belly runs the pointed reed,
Then, ſtrongly-tug'd, return'd imbru'd with gore;
And on the pile his reeking entrails bore.
The lame Sitophagus, oppreſs'd with pain,
Creeps from the deſp'rate dangers of the plain:
And where the ditches riſing weeds ſupply,
To ſpread their lowly ſhades beneath the ſky;
There lurks the ſilent mouſe reliev'd of heat,
And, ſafe imbower'd, avoids the chance of fate.
But here Troxartes, Phyſignathus there,
Whirl the dire furies of the pointed ſpear:
Then where the foot around its ankle plies,
Troxartes wounds, and Phyſignathus flies,
Halts to the pool, a ſafe retreat to find,
And trails a dangling length of leg behind.
The mouſe ſtill urges, ſtill the frog retires,
And half in anguiſh of the flight expires;
Then pious ardour young Praſſæus brings,
Betwixt the fortune of contending kings:
Lank, harmleſs frog! with forces hardly grown,
He darts the reed in combats not his own,
Which faintly tinkling on Troxartes' ſhield,
Hangs at the point, and drops upon the field.
  Now nobly tow'ring o'er the reſt appears
A gallant prince that far tranſcends his years,
Pride of his ſire, and glory of his houſe,
And more a Mars in combat than a mouſe:
His action bold, robuſt his ample frame,
And Meridarpax his reſounding name.
The warriour, ſingled from the fighting crowd,
Boaſts the dire honours of his arms aloud;
Then ſtrutting near the lake, with looks elate,
Threats all its nations with approaching fate.
And ſuch his ſtrength, the ſilver lakes around,
Might roll their waters o'er unpeopled ground.
But pow'rful Jove who ſhews no leſs his grace
To frogs that periſh, than to human race,

Felt ſoft compaſſion riſing in his ſoul,
And ſhook his ſacred head, that ſhook the pole.
Then thus to all the gazing pow'rs began,
The ſire of gods, and frogs, and mouſe, and man.
What ſeas of blood I view, what worlds of ſlain?
An Iliad riſing from a day's campaign!
How fierce his jav'lin, o'er the trembling lakes,
The black-furr'd hero, Meridarpax, ſhakes!
Unleſs ſome fav'ring deity deſcend,
Soon will the frogs loquacious empire end.
Let dreadful Pallas wing'd with pity fly,
And make her ægis blaze before his eye:
While Mars, refulgent on his rattling car,
Arreſts his raging rival of the war.
He ceas'd, reclining with attentive head,
When thus the glorious god of combats ſaid.
Nor Pallas, Jove! tho' Pallas take the field,
With all the terrours of her hiſſing ſhield;
Nor Mars himſelf, tho' Mars in armour bright
Aſcend his car, and wheel amidſt the fight;
Not theſe can drive the deſp'rate mouſe afar,
And change the fortunes of the bleeding war.
Let all go forth, all heav'n in arms ariſe;
Or launch thy own red thunder from the ſkies;
Such ardent bolts as flew that wond'rous day,
When heaps of Titans mix'd with mountains lay;
When all the giant-race enormous fell;
And huge Enceladus was hurl'd to hell.
'Twas thus th' armipotent adviſ'd the gods,
When from his throne the cloud-compeller nods;
Deep length'ning thunders run from pole to pole,
Olympus trembles as the thunders roll.
Then ſwift he whirls the brandiſh'd bolt around,
And headlong darts it at the diſtant ground;
The bolt, diſcharg'd, inwrap'd with lightning flies,
And rends its flaming paſſage thro' the ſkies:
Then earth's inhabitants, the nibblers, ſhake;
And frogs, the dwellers in the waters quake.
Yet ſtill the mice advance their dread deſign,
And the laſt danger threats the croaking line;

'Till Jove, that inly mourn'd the loſs they bore,
With ſtrange aſſiſtance fill'd the frighted ſhore.
Pour'd from the neighb'ring ſtrand, deform'd to view,
They march, a ſudden unexpected crew.
Strong ſuits of armour round their bodies cloſe,
Which like thick anvils blunt the force of blows;
In wheeling marches turn'd, oblique they go;
With happy claws their limbs divide below;
Fell ſheers the paſſage to their mouth command;
From out the fleſh the bones by nature ſtand:
Broad ſpread their backs, their ſhining ſhoulders riſe,
Unnumber'd joints diſtort their lengthen'd thighs,
With nervous cords their hands are firmly brac'd,
Their round black eye-balls in their boſom plac'd,
On eight long feet the wond'rous warriours tread,
And either end alike ſupplies a head.
Theſe to call crabs, mere mortal wits agree;
But gods have other names for things than we.
Now, where the jointures from their loins depend,
The heroes tails with ſev'ring graſps they rend.
Here, ſhort of feet, depriv'd the power to fly;
There, without hands, upon the field they lie.
Wrench'd from their holds, and ſcatter'd all around,
The bended lances heap the cumber'd ground.
Helpleſs amazement, fear purſuing fear,
And mad confuſion thro' their hoſt appear;
O'er the wild waſte with headlong flight they go,
Or creep conceal'd in vaulted holes below.
But down Olympus, to the weſtern ſeas,
Far-ſhooting Phœbus drove with fainter rays;
And a whole war (ſo Jove ordain'd) begun,
Was fought, and ceas'd, in one revolving ſun.

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